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CONFIDENTIAL.

PART XV.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF TURKEY.

July 1877.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Turkey.

PART XV.

No. 1.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, June* 30, 1877.

I HAVE submitted proposed Admiralty Certificate. Minister told me to-day that he saw no objection to it, and that Imperial Government, wishing to prevent any difficulty in regard to coal-shipping in general, has instructed Russian Ambassador in London to settle and decide all questions relating thereto with Her Majesty's Government.

No. 2.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, June* 30, 1877.

WELLESLEY hears that Turkish army has left Rustchuk to attack Russian position at Sistova. Prince Mirsky's division nearest Rustchuk has consequently entrenched itself. Probable crossing of Russians between both armies.

No. 3.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tiflis, June* 30, 1877.

RUSSIANS repulsed with severe loss near Batoum on the 25th. Russian armies marching on Erzeroum reported defeated. Russian force near Kars weak. No reserve at hand.

No. 4.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 213.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June* 30, 1877.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, have no means of communicating at present with Sulina. "Rapid" is required at Kustendji.

No. 5.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, July 1, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to my telegram of 23rd ultimo, you will be careful, in order to avoid future misunderstanding, to let the Porte understand that the Mission to Afghanistan will not be received officially by the Indian Government, but that the treatment of it will be strictly confined to the ordinary courtesy and hospitalities accorded to the Agents of foreign Governments passing through India without being accredited to the British Government.

No. 6.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July* 1, 1877.

(No. 214. Confidential.)

I AM very grateful for your telegram of yesterday, approving my conduct. May I inform Porte that the fleet is coming to Besika Bay? It is important, I think, that I should do so to prevent misconception in the present suspicious temper of the Turkish Government.

No. 7.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 215.) *Therapia, July* 1, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

FOLLOWING from Lennox, dated yesterday:—

"We stayed at Nicopolis till 27th. Russians fired at iron-clads on 22nd and 23rd, and commenced firing at the works at Nicopolis on 25th, and continued until we left, and also while we were within hearing of Nicopolis some shells fell in the town of Nicopolis, but it was not bombarded. The two iron-clads remained serviceable on 26th and probably on 27th. When we got near Sistova on 27th, we heard that Russians had crossed between Sistova and Wardin about 4 that morning. The Turks had 1 battalion and 1 gun at Sistova, and 5 battalions and 5 guns about an hour lower down. The Turks say that 2,000 Russians crossed each trip before the Turks attacked them. The Turks say the Russians had 1 iron-clad, 4 steam-launches, and 100 or 200 caiques, and they sank at least four or five boats. Troops were in action till half-past 3, and then all retired unpursued to Biela, and bivouacked on the right bank, where they were joined next morning by a brigade from Rustchuk. The Turks took two prisoners, who say the Russian and Roumanian force at Ziemnitza was from 55 to 60 battalions, 5 batteries, and 2 regiments of cavalry—at least 30,000 Russians: brought over two mountain-guns early, but did not pass over any cavalry till late. Telegraph cut before Russians crossed.

"We got to Rustchuk on afternoon of 28th. The bombardment then had ceased. We counted twenty shells burst in hospital konak.

"We reached Varna last night; stay till Monday probably."

No. 8.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 216.) *Therapia, July* 1, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

CONSUL READE, just arrived here from Rustchuk by Varna, gives a bad account of state of Turkish army and of incapacity of Turkish Generals and officers. Eshref Pasha, the Commander of the Rustchuk Division, has taken up a position at Biela with such forces as he can collect, which may amount to about 20,000 men, to oppose Russian advance. Reade stated that he has information from a trustworthy source that Russians are inciting the Bulgarians to massacre Mussulmans in Dobrutcha, and that about 3,000 Bashi-Bazouks are on their way to protect them. He anticipates

the most serious consequences to the Christians. I have directed Vice-Consul Sankey by telegraph to obtain trustworthy information, and to report to me at once.

No. 9.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 217.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July* 1, 1877.

WITH reference to your telegram of to-day I have already given the Grand Vizier clearly to understand that the Mission to Afghanistan cannot be received officially on its passage through India, and that it will be required to pass through our territory as quietly and quickly as possible.

Now that I am acquainted with the views of Her Majesty's Government with reference to the Mission, I will act accordingly.

No. 10.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, July* 1, 1877.

I AM informed that employé of Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs has been sent to Corfu in order to verify contents of cases belonging to Porte which have been detained there, and to arrange for their embarkation on board next Austrian steamer for Trieste.

No. 11.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(Confidential.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, July* 1, 1877.

COLONEL WELLESLEY starts to-night for the Emperor's head-quarters at Zimnitza, in compliance with His Imperial Majesty's invitation.

No. 12.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 1.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, June* 30, 1877.

INFORMATION which has reached the Persian Government confirms the previous report that the Russians have retired from Kizl Arvarl.

No. 13.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 68. Political.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, June* 6, 1877.

IN consequence of a telegram received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, I forwarded to his Excellency one in reply, in which I informed him that there was nothing going on here in confirmation of the apprehensions said to be prevailing with regard to Servia at Constantinople.

As regards the character of the Servian preparations, these are not such as to lead one to suppose any immediate purpose of commencing war, though they do not exclude hostile designs whenever a more favourable opportunity should present itself. Nothing is known here of the presence of Russian staff officers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 14.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 71. Political.)

Belgrade, June 11, 1877.

My Lord,

I AM informed that the Prince of Servia intends starting on Wednesday next for Bucharest, to pay a visit to the Emperor of Russia.

The Prince will be accompanied by his Foreign Minister, M. Ristitch, and also by three superior officers, viz., General Protitch, and Colonels Leshianine and Horvatovich, who hold important commands on the Timok and the Morava.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 15.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 74. Political.)

Belgrade, June 19, 1877.

My Lord,

VERY little information reaches Belgrade about military preparations going on in the Russian invading army in Roumania, but the scraps of intelligence which come to us from the Imperial head-quarters all relate the great activity of the Civil Department established there for the future organization of Bulgaria, under its Director, Prince Vladimir Cherkasski.

This nobleman, who is well-known as an eminent Slavophile, has sent to Russia for a Professor of Slavonic Jurisprudence, and all the Russian Consuls who formerly occupied posts in European Turkey have been now, *pro tem.*, attached to this Department, as also several leading Bulgarians residing in Wallachia.

All this points to most carefully-elaborated plans for the future government of this important province, as soon as it has been invaded and occupied by the Russian troops, and all these preparations remind one so much of the action taken by Prussia after the occupation of Holstein and Elsasz, that if a permanent annexation is not intended, there is every reason to suppose that Russia proposes transforming Bulgaria into a kind of dependency of its own, though it may still be nominally considered as subject to Turkey.

How different would have been the fate and future destiny of that important region inhabited by Bulgarians if the Porte had shown more deference to the friendly suggestions for the amelioration of its rule in these provinces during the Conference.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 16.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 75. Political.)

Belgrade, June 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Servian "Skoupstchina," or Legislative Assembly, is to meet at Kragoulevatz on the 1st of July next for an ordinary Session.

The principal subjects which are to be submitted for its deliberations are the Budgets for 1877 and 1878, and the voting of extraordinary supplies to cover the considerable arrears, for which no means are available, and the increased demands upon the Treasury, consequent upon the payment of interest on the loan contracted and heavy losses occasioned by the late unhappy war.

As the present Government wishes to avoid too great publicity and the influence of Belgrade politicians on illiterate members of the Assembly, an inland borough has been selected for the seat of its deliberations.

The Prince will proceed thither a few days after His Highness' return from Roumania.

At several recent elections the Government candidates have been defeated by persons known as personally opposed to the views of the men now in office.

It is, therefore, natural that the Servian Ministers would like to come to terms with the present Assembly rather than have recourse to the convocation of a new one. A dissolution must take place in January next, as the triennial period for which the present Assembly was elected expires about that time.

The voting of new taxes is sure to be most unpopular, and to be equally repugnant to every Servian "Skoupstchina."

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 17.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 76. Political.)

Belgrade, June 20, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE had the honour to explain in previous despatches that, according to my opinion, there exist no political parties in Servia, but only coteries of politicians, who try to influence the views of the large mass of illiterate electors and of their representatives in the "Skoupstchina."

The recent disasters have disorganized even these coteries, and it is impossible to forecast what may be the effect of the political events of the next few months on the leaders of opinion in Servia, and still less to predict the effect these may have on the minds of the country people.

Those politicians who call themselves Conservatives, and who held office under the leadership of M. Marinovitch, were very much opposed to the war, and enjoyed at one time the personal confidence of the Prince; but M. Marinovitch keeps aloof from home politics, and the exceptional legislation on the press enforced since the war commenced has even deprived them of a printed organ of their opinions, so that their influence cannot be either exerted openly or accurately gauged.

The solitary newspaper existing here, besides the official journal, is one completely in the hands of the men now in power.

It is said that there is much discontent in the country, and the results of recent elections would appear to confirm this view; but, with the prospect of military and political events of great importance occurring in the neighbourhood of Servia, it is quite impossible to predict what the temper of these people may become at any given moment.

The Prince, with his innate shrewdness, acts as if he had the fullest confidence in M. Ristitch.

In Servia, as in all adjacent Slav countries, the people look up to Russia as the Power from which great territorial changes in these parts may be expected; respect for the Great Czar and for Mother Russia is taught them from their childhood by their popes and priests; no other Power can, indeed, compete in influence here with that one, who is seeking to accelerate the dissolution of the Turkish Empire, and is supposed to do this for the benefit of Orthodox Slavs.

M. Ristitch was not a favourite at the Russian Court; he was considered not sufficiently subservient to Russian interests, and he made himself obnoxious to the Russians who held commands here during the late war. It remains to be seen how his views may become affected by his recent visit to the Czar's head-quarters.

One thing is certain, that electoral capital will be made out of this visit, and that the members of the "Skoupstchina," who will meet in a few days at Kragoulevatz, will be told that, by following gently the lead of their Prince and of his Ministers, they will be serving best the Russian cause and carrying out the behests of the Imperial Liberator.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 18.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 77. Political.)

Belgrade, June 21, 1877.

My Lord,

I AM informed that Prince Milan has taken with him two memorandums, for presentation to the Russian Cabinet.

One of these is drawn up by General Protitch, and describes the military condition and resources of the Principality.

The other is elaborated by M. Ristitch, and represents the views of that Minister on the political situation and prospects of his country, endeavouring to elicit from Prince Gortchakow, by his production, some expression as to Russia's intentions with respect to this Principality.

M. Ristitch is reported as pleading in this document for the independence of Servia, and for her aggrandisement on her southern frontier, by an addition of territory from Novi-Bazar to Nisch, in the district popularly known as Old Servia.

This latter pretension is consonant with the well-known views of M. Ristitch, but I am not aware of his having become a convert for entire independence, as he has always expressed himself to me as extremely opposed to such a change for his country.

If Russia recommends this Government to continue their passive attitude, they will no doubt beg that they may be allowed to hope some such profit whenever peace is concluded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 19.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 79. Political.)

Belgrade, June 23, 1877.

My Lord,

HER Majesty's Ambassador, having kindly informed me on the 20th instant by telegraph that the Porte was apprehensive lest the Russian army should cross the Danube at Kladova into Servia, I sent in reply a telegram to his Excellency to the following effect:—

From the information received here from Little Wallachia, it appears that there are no Russian troops on this side of the Aluta, nor in that province; it is, therefore, most unlikely that the Russians contemplate a further delay, which would be indispensable if they intended crossing the Danube between Turnu Severin and Kladova, and marching through Servia.

The troops stationed in Little Wallachia are Roumanians, and it is only in Bucharest that one might learn how far there is any intention on their part to assume the offensive in the direction of Servia. I am without any information on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 20.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 80. Political. Confidential.)

Belgrade, June 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE been confidentially informed that Prince Gortchakow has communicated to the Russian Acting Agent here the following particulars as the result of Prince Milan's first interview at Ploiesti with the Emperor of Russia:—

"The Emperor has urged the Prince to continue to maintain a purely defensive attitude in the present war, and to spare no efforts to keep up a good understanding with Austria."

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 21.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 141. Political.)

Bucharest, June 19, 1877.

My Lord,

IT would appear to be now decided that in due course the Roumanian army will cross the Danube.

The passage will be attempted at Gruia, a locality some little distance higher up the Danube than Kalafat, and it is reported that the action of the Roumanian force is to be confined to a radius of fifteen miles round Widdin.

Operations, I presume, partaking of the character of a siege, will be carried out against Widdin, and the excuse of this Government is that the latter is a standing menace to their position at Kalafat.

A service will be rendered to the Russians if the Widdin garrison be held in check; but, on the other hand, a disaster might happen to the Roumanian army, for it is impossible to suppose that the Turkish garrison at Widdin is not numerically and, in a military point of view, superior to any force which could be at the disposition of Prince Charles for the attack of that position.

Up to the present date, the disposition of the Russian forces does not indicate that the Roumanian army will be supported by a Russian contingent, but the material for the siege operations will be furnished by Russia, and there are already Russian naval and engineer officers preparing the bridging apparatus at Gruia.

I need hardly repeat to your Lordship that this war policy of the Moldo-Wallachian Government is in direct opposition to the voice of the whole population in both Principalities, and it is also stated that the Emperor has exhibited much reluctance in acquiescing in the wishes of the Roumanian Government in this respect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 22.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 142. Political. Confidential.)

Bucharest, June 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship the arrival of Prince Milan of Servia in Bucharest, and that His Highness immediately proceeded to Ploiesti to wait upon the Emperor Alexander.

It would appear that the Emperor told Prince Milan, in very plain language, that any action on the part of Servia did not at present enter into the Russian policy, and indeed, under the existing understanding with Austria, must not be entertained for a moment.

It is stated that the firm language of the Czar has made a serious impression on the Servian Ministers who accompany Prince Milan, and that some encouragement was expected in the direction of a policy of action.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 23.

Consul Moore to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 12. Political.) *Jerusalem, June 21, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of my despatch of this date, to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, on the state of the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

Inclosure in No. 23.

Consul Moore to Mr. Layard.

Jerusalem, June 21, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 9th instant, I have the honour to report that the battalion of regulars left Jerusalem on the 17th, to embark at Jaffa.

I should have reported to your Excellency that my colleagues of Austria, France, Germany, and Italy, addressed telegraphic despatches to their respective Embassies to the same effect as my own to your Excellency, remonstrating against the removal of these troops.

Within three days of the departure of the regulars, the Beduins made a descent on the village of Anata, distant one hour from Jerusalem, and plundered it. A detachment of Redifs and mounted gendarmes have been sent off in pursuit of the robbers.

The Redifs are likewise under orders to leave for the capital when the Moustahfiz are enrolled. These levies are quite similar in composition, except that the Redifs, having been embodied many months ago, are now trained and drilled. The enrolment of the Moustahfiz progresses slowly, on account of the reluctance of the inhabitants after so many calls on them, and the flight of considerable numbers to avoid serving.

Raouf Pasha, the new Governor, has proceeded to Gaza to try to settle the Bedouin disputes, and thus remove a chief source of danger to public security. His Excellency would have had a better chance of success had he been backed by a body of regular troops.

The inquiry into the Moslem riot at Lydda has terminated. The rioters, twenty-four in number, have been divided into three classes, and severally sentenced to three, two, and one month's imprisonment, an adequate punishment if duly carried out; but reports have reached me that this is not being done in all cases. It was confirmed that they threw filth into the church through the windows they had broken.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 24.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 186. Political.) *Alexandria, June 21, 1877.*

My Lord,

I AM informed that the inclosed record of a revelation sworn by a Sheikh of the Prophet's Tomb to have been made to him by the Prophet, has been posted up in the native districts of Cairo and has created a certain sensation there.

This and many other symptoms tend to show that religious influences are being actively called into play to stimulate the fervour of Moslems in the present war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Record of a Revelation sworn by a Sheikh of the Prophet's Tomb to have been made to him by the Prophet.

(Translation.)

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Praise be to God, the Ruler of the Universe. God bless and save the most noble of all apostles.

THIS is a commandment given to Sheikh Ahmed, Servant of the Prophet's Tomb, received from him at Cairo by telegraph.

God bless and save the Prophet. The Sheikh said: The Prophet (to whom be all praise) appeared to me in my sleep on Thursday night. He was reading the Holy Koran, and said to me: "Oh Sheikh Ahmed, the faithful are suffering for their misdeeds!" I heard the Angels say that they (the faithful) have ceased to worship God who, in his wrath, hath determined to visit upon them His resentment, whereupon I said, "Oh Lord God, thou so merciful and compassionate, have mercy on my followers! I shall make known unto them thy resentment and they shall repent, and if they repent not let Thy will be done." And the Prophet (whose name be ever glorified) said further unto me: "My people have become corrupt and wicked. They have neglected their devotions and become fornicators and lewd. They are addicted to drink and have grown into slanderers and backbiters. They despise the poor and oppressed and give them no alms. They have neglected their prayers and do not practice charity. Rise thou Sheikh Ahmed and say: 'Neglect ye not your prayers, and if ye meet a brother who doth not pray salute ye him not, and when he die attend ye not his funeral. Be ye warned and avoid fornication, whether by deed or thought. Exhort them thou to repentance, as the hour is fast approaching when the world shall come to an end and the sun shall rise in the west. I have warned them repeatedly, but they heeded not and persist in their transgression, debauchery and lewdness. This, therefore, is the last warning.'"

Sheikh Ahmed added: On awaking I found this Commandment written in green letters by the side of the Tomb, and the Prophet (whose name be ever praised) said: "Whosoever conveyeth this commandment from place to place shall receive his reward in Paradise, and I shall plead for him on the day of judgment, and whosoever doth not keep a copy of this commandment after perusal maketh an enemy of me on the day of judgment."

And the said Sheikh Ahmed said: "Three times do I swear by the name of God that this is true and may I die an infidel if I say a falsehood. May the wrath of God, in whom we place our trust, and who is omnipresent and omniscient, rest on him who attempteth to change this commandment."

"There is no life nor strength but in God, and whosoever believeth not is an infidel. Fear ye God who shall deliver ye from evil. May the blessings of God rest on the Holy Prophet, Mohamet, on his flock and followers."

No. 25.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 187. Political.) *Alexandria, June 21, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatches Nos. 75 and 77, Confidential, of the 8th instant, inclosing copies of despatches from Lord Lyons and Mr. Layard respecting Halim Pasha's intrigues, I have the honour to report that, with the exception of a few personal friends, Halim Pasha's pretensions to supplant the Viceroy have no supporters here.

His present action is probably attributable in a great measure to the delay and difficulty interposed to the payment of moneys undoubtedly due to him by the Khedive for the purchase of his estate.

I need hardly add that the rumour referred to by Mr. Layard of a secret Treaty between the Russian Consul-General and Cherif Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, is utterly without foundation.

Cherif Pasha's sympathies are strongly with the Turks in their struggle with

Russia, and he is the Minister who, above all others, has maintained the absolute necessity of cordial and intimate relations with England.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 26.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 192. Political.)
Cairo, June 23, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Khedive, in our conversation to-day, said that he was well aware of Halim Pasha's proceedings at Paris, but that he also knew that the Prince had returned to Constantinople without having received the least encouragement from the French Government in his designs to supplant him in Egypt. He assured me that the purchase-money of Halim Pasha's estate had been duly paid to him, and that the allowance of 60,000*l.* a year, which was the ground of his complaint, had been granted on condition that he neither returned to Egypt nor intrigued in Egyptian affairs. This engagement, which had been notified to the Porte, had not been observed by the Prince, but the Khedive was prepared, notwithstanding, to continue to him the allowance, although he could not show him any preference or favour over the rest of his family.

He spoke slightingly of Khalil Cherif Pasha as a man easily to be bought, and he expressed no fear of Halim Pasha's intrigues or pretensions.

The Khedive further told me that he had rather underrated to me the number of troops he had sent to Turkey. The last batch numbered probably about 8,000 or 9,000 men, and, in all, he had sent about 19,000 men there. His Highness said that Egypt paid these troops, but that the Porte found them in rations. He added that, at the request of the Porte he had sent them 42,000 muskets, about 10,000,000 cartridges, some fuses, &c.; so, as he said, "no one can pretend that I have refused to help my Suzerain." He positively affirmed, however, that he had sent no assistance in money.

He also told me that before the Turkish squadron arrived at Alexandria, he had received a warning that a torpedo attack would be made upon it by some Greeks, and that for this reason no shore boats had been allowed to go alongside.

His Highness spoke most despairingly of the prospects of Turkey and of the issue of the present war, and thought that her only chance lay in the recall of Midhat Pasha, who might yet be able to control events at Constantinople, where, as His Highness thought, the chief danger lay; but, unfortunately, Midhat Pasha's adherents were suspected of belonging to the party of the ex-Sultan Mourad, and were therefore obnoxious to the present Sultan.

His Highness begged me to thank Her Majesty's Government for their congratulations upon the conclusion of peace between Egypt and Abyssinia, which I had conveyed to him, and which had given him sincere pleasure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 27.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 128.)
Athens, June 21, 1877.

My Lord,

IN answer to inquiries which I made of M. Tricoupi this forenoon, as to whether any secret agent had been sent by the Hellenic Government to meet the Emperor of Russia in Roumania, he at once assured me that he had no knowledge whatever of any such step having been taken, and that he did not believe that it could have been taken without his knowledge.

I have sent the above information to Mr. Layard.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 28.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 132.)
Athens, June 23, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Hellenic Government have lately ordered some detachments of troops to proceed to Lamia, with a view to strengthen their forces in the neighbourhood of the frontier.

M. Tricoupi informed me that this step had been taken at the urgent request of the Prefect of Lamia, and in consequence of the number of deserters from the Turkish army and others who were constantly attempting to cross the frontier into Greece, as well as on account of the disturbed state of the frontier.

There is a Convention between the two Governments for the mutual surrender of deserters which, M. Tricoupi said, it would be difficult to carry out under present circumstances without giving rise to disputes in many instances, and it was upon the whole thought better to draw a cordon, in order to prevent as far as possible any Turkish deserters or bad characters from entering Greek territory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 29.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 1. Confidential.)
Bucharest, June 22, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to telegraph yesterday to your Lordship the probability of the Russians crossing the Danube to-day at Galatz and Braila.

I hear that at the former place a crossing was effected this morning.

Too much importance should not be attached to this fact, as an inundated swamp prevents a rapid movement on Matchin, and the Turks evidently never intended to oppose the Russians at either of the above-mentioned points.

I also telegraphed yesterday to your Lordship the probable positions of the various Russian army corps, and I am indebted to Colonel Brackenbury, R.A., ("Times" correspondent) for this information.

The delicate position in which I unfortunately have been placed since my interview with the Grand Duke Nicholas, has rendered it necessary for me to remain at Bucharest, and I have studiously avoided visiting any Russian camp or bivouac, not considering myself attached to the active army until further orders from your Lordship.

For the same reason I thought it prudent to wear plain clothes.

These circumstances, however, have not prevented me from obtaining certain information concerning the Russian army and its movements, and having communicated what I considered of most importance by telegraph, I have now the honour to submit further details which may be of interest—details which I have learnt from eye-witnesses and experienced officers, one of whom is a German officer of distinction.

When the Russian troops first entered Roumania, the men appeared in excellent health and marched well without stragglers.

As soon, however, as the hot weather set in, a marked change became apparent, particularly in the infantry, and the fine drawn appearance of the men testified to the hardships they endured, notwithstanding the fictitious air of health imparted by their sunburnt faces.

The Russian soldiers carry two uniforms, one of course cloth and the second of white canvas. The latter, as well as white covering to the forage caps, were adopted in Central Asia, but will probably be abandoned as affording too good an aim to the enemy.

The infantry boots, though good, appear too heavy and close-fitting for summer campaigning.

The men are terribly overweighted, and carry their arms and equipment regardless of regulation, their march is irregular, and there are many lame soldiers in the ranks.

The mounted officers of infantry are disgracefully mounted.

During the winter, at Kisheneff, firing practice has been entirely neglected,

although there are many men in the ranks who have not gone through their first course of musketry instruction.

A very large proportion of the Russians being armed with the Verinche rifle, it is incontestable that the Turks are better armed.

The Russian infantry will no doubt fight well, as it always has done, with submissive, even blind obedience, but it is wanting in dash and initiative, and the tactics are evidently to crush the Turks by numbers, regardless of all sacrifice of life.

The cavalry and artillery show to better advantage than the infantry, and have evidently more spirit in them. The artillery horses are, however, much the worse for severe marches, whereas the cavalry horses, both regular and irregular, are in perfect condition.

This is accounted for by the fact that in the cavalry the men generally lead their horses, and that in the artillery it was frequently necessary to put as many as twenty horses to a gun to pull it through the clay and mud, so bad was the state of the roads.

The batteries appear to have their complement of officers, whereas the deficit in the infantry is lamentable, very few companies of 250 men having as many as three officers.

The infantry battalions are very weak, and cannot be reckoned at more than 700 men per battalion.

The sotnias of Cossacks are from seventy to eighty men strong.

The regular cavalry appears up to its strength.

In the irregular cavalry there are scarcely any sore backs, and very few in the regular cavalry.

The delay in attempting to cross the Danube is, I believe, to be attributed to the fact that the troops are not even yet concentrated.

Hazardous as it may appear to venture an opinion on so doubtful and important a question, I cannot but think that if the Russians aim at Adrianople they will scarcely attain their object in one campaign.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRED. WELLESLEY.

No. 30.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 58. Political.) *Bosna-Serai, June 22, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch, Political, No. 55 of the 7th June, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Mushir, Suleiman Pasha, being obliged, after the battle at Christack of the 3rd instant, to await a further supply of provisions and ammunition, only recommenced his march towards Nichsich on the 11th instant. He reached Pressicka on the 13th without opposition, but on the following day had another severe encounter with the enemy, who were, however, repulsed and retreated towards Ostrog, leaving on the field of battle, according to Turkish official accounts, 300 dead. Suleiman Pasha reckons the total loss of the Montenegrins in this engagement at 1,500 killed and wounded, while the Turkish losses amounted to only 3 officers and 24 men killed, and 8 officers and 86 men wounded. I need hardly say, however, that no reliance can be placed on the correctness of these numbers, and I believe the Turkish losses were much greater.

Having revictualled Nichsich, the Mushir advanced towards Ostrog on the 17th instant. The defile of Ostrog was defended by about 4,000 Montenegrins, but they do not appear to have offered any serious resistance, and were soon driven from their positions, which were then occupied by the Turks. Suleiman Pasha hoped in two or three days to accomplish a junction with the corps d'armée of Ali Saib Pasha, but, as no news to that effect have yet been received here, it is feared that he has met with further and unexpected resistance on the part of the enemy.

There is no doubt that in this instance the Turks have gained a decided success, although at a considerable sacrifice of life; but the Montenegrins, who were opposed to a force three times as numerous as their own, have suffered losses still more serious to their small army, and it seems to be the general opinion that the war will now be brought to a speedy close.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 31.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 59. Political.)

My Lord, *Bosna-Serai, June 22, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copies of two telegrams lately published in the "Manchester Guardian," from their correspondent at Ragusa, reporting outrages in Bosnia.

No. 1 reports that the insurgent, Jovan Dunjelwivich, who was captured near Gabella on the 23rd of April, was impaled on the branch of a tree, and that a fire was lighted beneath him and he was roasted to death. I have made every possible inquiry on the subject, and can learn nothing confirmatory of this report. The French and Austrian Consuls at Mostar inform me as the result of their investigations that they are convinced that no such atrocity has been committed, and the latter of these gentlemen, M. Strautz, says that the Catholic priest at Metkovitch, in Dalmatia, close to Gabella, to whom he had written on the subject, replied that nothing had been heard there of this or any similar act of barbarity. He said that it was known that two Mirdite emissaries from Albania were in the country, and it was reported that they had been seized by the Turks, but he had not heard that they had been ill-treated. On the other hand, the Mutessarif of Mostar stated that he was aware of the arrival of these emissaries, but the authorities had not been able as yet to lay their hands on them.

No. 2 mentions the impalement and massacre at Derbend and Banialuka of Bosnian refugees returning from Servia. Nothing is known of the matter here. In the absence of the Governor-General I have informed Constant Pasha, who has telegraphed to the Mutessarif of Banialuka on the subject, and I have also requested the Austrian Consul-General, M. Theodorovitch, to instruct his Vice-Consul at Banialuka to inquire into and report the real facts of the case. I will communicate to your Lordship as soon as possible whatever information I may receive.

Persons better acquainted with these countries than the Ragusa correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian" know the extreme difficulty of obtaining correct information on any subject, at only a short distance from the scene of events, and yet that gentleman, living beyond the frontier, and at a distance of at least 250 miles, does not hesitate to make his assertion in the most positive manner, and mislead the public, without having the means of verifying what he states.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 31.

Extract from "Galignani's Messenger" of June 3, 1877.

MASSACRE OF BOSNIAN REFUGEES.—The "Manchester Guardian's" correspondent at Ragusa telegraphed on Thursday evening:—

"I am now in possession of full and trustworthy information relating to a massacre of refugees at Derbend, in northern Bosnia, and the proof of the complicity of Turkish officials is complete. Many Bosnian Rayahs who had taken refuge in Servia took advantage of the Turkish offer of an amnesty to return to the district of Derbend, giving due notice to the Government officials. Immediately, however, on crossing the frontier, the refugees were seized, driven to Derbend, and thrown into a fœtid dungeon, where they suffered hunger and bodily torture. From Derbend they were transported to Banialuka. Nine, whose names I know, were murdered in the dungeons. The whole number of the victims is not known, but a correspondent here from the 'Vienna Tagespresse' rates it as high as sixty. Perhaps Mr. Consul Holmes will inquire into this occurrence and report upon it. Derbend is on the high road to Serajevo, and he has, therefore, no excuse for ignorance; I am also informed by accurate and truthful persons that the same reign of terror prevails in northern Bosnia as I know to be the rule in the south and west. Murders and robberies are committed daily. The Turkish authorities either refuse all protection to Christians or are actual accomplices in the outrages. The law being in abeyance, the rayahs in despair, take to arms, and look to Russia for help."

Inclosure 2 in No. 31.

Extract from the "Manchester Guardian."

THE REIGN OF TERROR IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

(Special Telegram.)

(From our Ragusa Correspondent.)

Ragusa, Monday, 2 P.M.

I HAVE received from the Herzegovina accounts of barbarities similar to those already perpetrated in North and Western Bosnia. My source of information is two-fold. A trustworty informant, who is connected with the Montenegrin ambulance, writes that the insurgent Iovan Dunjelwivich was captured, after being wounded by the Turks, near Gabella on the 23rd of April. He was forthwith impaled on the branch of a tree, a fire was lighted beneath him, and he was roasted to death. This account is confirmed from a perfectly independent source. A Ragusan gentleman has received a letter, written in secret ink as a precaution, from a respectable merchant at Mostar, who states that, while on a business journey from Drashevo, by Gabella, he came upon a party of Turks, who were dragging a body, which bore traces of fire, to the River Narenta. The merchant heard that the body was that of an insurgent who had been captured there, but could not learn his name.

The witness refuses to give his own name or to inform the Consuls, fearing that his life would be sacrificed if the Turks knew that he had given information.

Such is the reign of law in Mostar.

No. 32.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 60. Political.)

Bosna-Serai, June 22, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 54, Political, of the 6th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that a few days after the return of Ismet Pasha from his fruitless expedition against the insurgents, intelligence was received here that bands had made their appearance near Yaitza, in the Sandjak of Travnik, and were already committing acts of depredation in that neighbourhood. Ismet Pasha was sent for the third time, with very strict orders from the Commander of the troops in Bosnia, Vely Pasha, to clear the country of these marauding bands. Vely Pasha informed me yesterday that Ismet Pasha has had several successful encounters with the insurgents, and is now establishing military posts in different parts of the country to check any further depredations. The Sandjaks of Bihach and Banialuka have been devastated during the last two years, and the insurgents, lacking the means of subsistence, will doubtless this summer ravage the Sandjak of Travnik if efficient measures be not adopted for the protection of the scattered villages and farm-houses.

Constant Pasha informs me that an insurgent Chief named Spasovich, formerly an innkeeper at Priedor, having lately tendered his submission, he has instructed the Kaimakam of that town to restore to him his house and property, and allow him to resume his calling on his producing two sureties for his future good conduct. Constant Pasha has informed the Porte of this step, and has asked for instructions as to how he is to act in the case of the submission of other insurgents.

Constant Pasha also informs me that about 500 refugees from the district of Belina have lately returned from Servia by way of Ratscha, bringing with them cattle and property to the value of about 6,000*l.*, and are proceeding to establish themselves on their former lands.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 33.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 527.)

Vienna, June 20, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to recent information forwarded from Ragusa, relative to the critical condition of the Montenegrin forces, I have been informed at the Foreign Office that a telegram received from Scutari by the Austrian Government does not confirm Mr. St. John's report, but states, on the contrary, that both Mehemet Ali and Saib Pashas have met with reverses, and that Suleiman, though on Montenegrin territory, is making but slow progress, his position being still near the frontier, while his troops are subject to severe losses.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 34.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 534.)

Vienna, June 21, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Mr. Layard's telegram of this day, acquainting me with information which appears to have been received by the Porte as to Austria having assented to the passage of Russian troops through Servia, I have the honour to state that nothing has transpired here in confirmation of such an apprehension, and that, on the contrary, a belief appears to be entertained by the press that a mobilization of a part of the Austro-Hungarian army for the protection of Austrian interests in Servia and elsewhere will shortly take place.

It appears to me also that the duplicity of the connivance of Austria in the passage of a Russian force at Gladova would be too flagrant to be credible, after she had induced the Porte not to take defensive measures against such an eventuality.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 35.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 537. Confidential.)

Vienna, June 22, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch of yesterday, on the subject of an apprehension entertained at Constantinople that a part of the Russian army may cross from Roumania into Servia, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I alluded to the subject to-day, in a conversation with Baron Orczy, observing that it appeared to me impossible that there could be any foundation for such a report, after the understanding which Austria had come to with Russia and Turkey on the subject. His Excellency answered that he believed a few Cossacks were the only Russian troops on this side of the Aluta, and that there were no grounds whatever for suspecting Russia of an intention to send a part of her army across the Danube to Gladova.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 36.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No 539.)

Vienna, June 23, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my previous despatch respecting the alleged intention of Russia to enter Servia, I am told that Count Zichy has been instructed to state, in reply to the inquiry of the Porte on the subject, that the Government of the Emperor not only believe that no such measure is in contemplation, but that the Emperor Alexander

has also advised both Roumania and Servia, and more especially the latter Principality, not to take a part in the war. As the Austro-Hungarian Government cannot, however, be responsible for the conduct of Servia, they have declined to give any advice on the question.

I have also been informed that the Servian Agent here called yesterday at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to explain that the visit of Prince Milan to the Emperor of Russia had not been made with a view to obtain his assent to Servia renewing hostilities, but that His Highness might be able to demonstrate to his own subjects that he was acting by the wishes and advice of His Imperial Majesty in maintaining peace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 37.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 541.)
My Lord, *Vienna, June 23, 1877.*

ACCORDING to the official telegrams which have been received to-day at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the corps of Suleiman Pasha, which is advancing from the Duga Pass, and the Montenegrin army are occupying opposite heights at Ostrog, and daily skirmishes occur between them, which generally end favourably to the latter.

The two other Turkish corps under Mehemet Ali and Saib Pashas are said to have been repulsed and to be unable to advance towards Ostrog to effect a junction with that of Suleiman Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 38.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 549.)
My Lord, *Vienna, June 28, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I communicated to Baron Orczy a memorandum of the substance of the correspondence between your Lordship and Mr. Layard, of which copies were transmitted to me in your despatch No. 198 of the 8th of June, relative to the state of siege at Constantinople, and the question as to whether it could be extended under any circumstances to foreigners residing in Turkey, under the protection of the Capitulations. I have since been told by Baron Orczy, for the information of Her Majesty's Government, that when the measure was first spoken of, Count Zichy was instructed to state to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Imperial Government could not permit Austro-Hungarian subjects to be made liable to domiciliary visits in search of arms, or to other arbitrary acts of the Turkish police, incompatible with the rights of foreigners living under the protection of the Capitulations; and that after the proposed measure obtained the sanction of Parliament, Safvet Pasha gave an assurance to his Excellency that, if it was carried out, no domiciliary visits would be made in cases in which Austro-Hungarian subjects were implicated, except in concert with a Dragoman of the Embassy; and that should suspicion of illegal practices attach to Austro-Hungarian subjects, any proceedings which might be necessary to ascertain their guilt, would be only instituted in concurrence with an officer of the Consulate.

Baron Orczy further stated that as these assurances were accepted by Count Andrassy as satisfactory, it has not been thought necessary to give Count Zichy any further instruction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 39.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 554.)
My Lord, *Vienna, June 28, 1877.*

FROM the official information received by the Imperial Government from Cattaro, Cettigné, and Ragusa, the corps of Suleiman Pasha and of Ali Saib Pasha are concentrated between Spuz and Podgoritza, and, as they have suffered serious losses during the late fighting, and the Montenegrins are still capable of resisting their advance into the interior, it is considered doubtful whether they will attempt to occupy Cettigné.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 40.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 2.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 30 Juin, 1877.*

POUR faire suite à mon télégramme du 24 Juin, je vous transmets ci-après l'extrait d'un télégramme adressé au Palais Impérial par le Gouverneur-Général d'Erzeroum, et signalant de nouvelles atrocités commises par les Russes à Ardahan:—

"Le jour même de son entrée à Ardahan, l'ennemi a tiré sur l'hôpital sans égard pour le pavillon qui le surmontait, et a tué tous les infirmiers et plusieurs malades pour se venger des habitants d'Avilar qui servent dans l'armée Impériale. Les Russes maltraitent leurs parents et déshonorent leurs femmes et leurs filles. Entre autres, la famille du Gouverneur de Zaruchard, qui se trouve en service à Kars, après avoir subi un traitement ignoble, a été internée en Russie. En outre, les Russes ont saccagé les villages de Djerza et de Hadji Tchiftlik, sous prétexte que quelques habitants se seraient livrés à l'espionage. Après avoir été dépouillée de tout, même de ses derniers vêtements, la population, sans distinction d'âge ni de sexe, a été envoyée à Kars dans un état parfait de nudité. Afin de se mettre à l'abri de ces maux, un grand nombre de personnes se voient dans la nécessité de faire acte de soumission."

No. 41.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 2.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 1 Juillet, 1877.*

LES Russes, au mépris des droits de l'humanité et sans nécessité militaire, ont entièrement détruit la ville florissante de Roustchouk, qui n'est plus aujourd'hui qu'un amas de ruines, en dirigeant spécialement leur feu sur les habitations placées en dehors des fortifications et de nos ouvrages de défense.

L'armée Russe n'a épargné ni les établissements religieux, ni les hôpitaux, ni les édifices publics, et a accompli ainsi une œuvre dépourvue de toute justification et qui n'avait d'autre but que la dévastation, car il lui serait impossible d'établir qu'un pareil acte pût servir les opérations militaires. C'est pourquoi nous la signalons à la justice et à l'humanité de l'Europe et à la conscience publique.

No. 42.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 2.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 1 Juillet, 1877.*

MEHEMED ALI PACHA vient d'adresser au Ministre de la Guerre un télégramme, dont voici l'extrait:—

"Le Dichtourz, sis sur les bords de la Rivière Tara, dépendance de Panighakova, fut, le 31 Mai, le théâtre d'actes de cruauté et de barbarie révoltants. Les Monténégrins mutilèrent le nez, les lèvres et les bras de trois soldats prisonniers appartenant au troisième bataillon de réserve de Salonique. Un enfant de onze ans fut massacré.

Un réserviste égaré, Mehemed Bin Hassan de Gumuldjine, étant tombé entre les mains des montagnards, eut le nez, la joue droite, les lèvres et les moustaches coupés.

"Le 23 Juin, l'armée Impériale se mit en marche vers la Moratcha pour aller punir les auteurs de ces méfaits. Le choc eut lieu non loin de cette rivière. De part et d'autre, on ouvrit un feu violent dont plusieurs habitants du bas et du haut Moratcha furent atteintes. Enfin, les Monténégrins, accourus au nombre de plus de 5,000 de Bielopavlovic, de Retchina, de Vassovic Deliporika, et de Lipova, furent battus et prirent la fuite, après 6 heures de luttes, laissant sur le champ de combat non moins de 500 morts, ainsi que nombre d'armes et de chevaux. Nos pertes s'élèvent à 89 morts et 178 blessés.

No. 43.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, July 2, 1877.*

I AM reliably informed that Prince Bismarck sees no immediate cause for alarm with regard to France; the tone of the press will now be more moderate.

The Prince manifests great anxiety at the aspect of affairs respecting the East, and is desirous to anticipate further complications by (group left out ?) with Her Majesty's Government.

His Highness expressed the wish to see Lord Odo Russell, who is expected to-night.

No. 44.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 2, 1877, 5·45 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 214, you may inform the Porte that the fleet has been ordered to Besika Bay. It started from the Pireus this morning.

No. 45.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 218.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 2, 1877.*

IN case of threatened occupation by Russians of places where there are British Consuls and Vice-Consuls, do you wish latter to remain or to withdraw?

I have been asked question by some of them.

No. 46.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 219.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 2, 1877.*

SULTAN presided at a Council of Ministers to-day. He reproached them for having deceived him about the state of his army in Bulgaria, and for having allowed the Russians to cross the Danube without opposition. He ordered Redif Pasha, the Minister of War, to leave to-day for Shumla. I am informed, but cannot vouch for the truth of the information, that it was decided in the Council that the army in Bulgaria should fall back at once upon the Balkans, leaving sufficient force in the fortresses to hold them.

No. 47.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 220.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 2, 1877.*

WITH reference to your telegram of the 29th ultimo, I submitted despatch of the Vice-Consul at Damascus to Mr. Fawcett as soon as it reached me, and I have to-day received from him an elaborate opinion upon the subject, which I will send to your Lordship by next messenger. The questions raised by the Vice-Consul present considerable difficulties, and I think it better to wait your Lordship's instructions before taking any steps.

No. 48.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 221. Most Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 2, 1877.*

THE news that our fleet was coming to Besika Bay was known to-day in Constantinople by telegraph from Athens. It was not well received except by the Sultan. We are much suspected and distrusted at this moment. There is an idea that we are prepared to abandon Turkey altogether, and to take something for ourselves. I have reason to believe that the attempts to set the Sultan against me have not succeeded, and I hope to see him in a day or two. German as well as Russian agents are endeavouring to destroy influence of England altogether, and to make the Turks believe that no trust should be placed in us, and that if they want peace they must look to Russia alone.

No. 49.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 222.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 2, 1877.*

AS notwithstanding the promises given me, Kemball is not apparently allowed to telegraph, I have no trustworthy news from the seat of war in Asia. According to telegram just received by the Porte, the Turkish troops have had four engagements with Russians near Alishkerd, two of which were serious. The Russians are stated to have been driven back to Kara Kilissé with considerable loss. Troops are being hurried up to Sofia. Twenty-five battalions have just left for that place. Fresh reports are current of massacres of Mussulmans by Bulgarians.

No. 50.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, July 2, 1877.*

AN official telegram received to-day reports occupation of Turnova, near the Balkans, by a cavalry force under General Skoboleff.

No. 51.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Stuart.

(No. 34. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 2, 1877.*

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration your despatch No. 114 of the 9th ultimo, reporting an interview with M. Tricoupi, in which he had asked the views of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the policy which Greece should pursue in order to secure the future interests of the Hellenic race.

M. Tricoupi undertakes to endeavour to prevent outbreaks in the neighbouring provinces upon condition of obtaining a promise from Great Britain that when the time comes for entering upon negotiations for peace, it will be considered that there is an Hellenic question before Europe, no less than if such an Hellenic question had been raised by the actual insurrection of all the Hellenic provinces.

It is not clear from M. Tricoupi's statement what is the precise meaning which he attaches to this expression.

Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to give any assurances in relation to events which might occur in case of the dissolution of the Turkish Empire in Europe. It would, in their opinion, be both improper and premature to contemplate such a contingency as the partition of the country now under Turkish rule.

They are, however, ready to assure the Greek Government that, so far as may lie in their power, they will, when the time comes for the consideration of the settlement of the questions arising out of the war, be ready to use their best influence to secure for the Greek population in the Turkish provinces any administrative reforms or advantages which may be conferred upon the Christian population of any other race.

In the meanwhile they would counsel the Greek Government to preserve a prudent attitude, and not to alienate the sympathy of this country, which has always shown such interest in the welfare of Greece, by raising insurrectionary movements in the Turkish provinces, which can only serve to increase the misery and devastation of the war, and injure the populations whose interests the Greek Government desire to secure.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 52.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 267.)
Foreign Office, July 2, 1877.

Sir,

I INCLOSE herewith to your Excellency a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul in Crete,[a] relative to the wish of the Cretans to be placed under the protection of Great Britain; and with regard to the statement reported to have been made by one of the Chiefs of the island that this idea had been suggested or encouraged by Mr. Erskine when representing Her Majesty at Athens, I send you three copies of a Memorandum which has been prepared in this Office, showing what took place in reference to this question in 1868.

I have to request your Excellency to communicate a copy of this Memorandum to Mr. Sandwith.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 53.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 25.)
Tunis, June 21, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to state that, owing to the reports which reached me that the Bey, yielding to the pressing representations of the French Representative as well as to a direct menace from St. Petersburgh, had declared the neutrality of this Regency in the war between his Suzerain the Sultan and Russia, I called yesterday upon the Prime Minister to ascertain from him whether there was any foundation for these reports.

General Khaïreddin said that the French Chargé d'Affaires having asked for an audience of the Bey without, however, previously informing him of his object, had endeavoured to persuade His Highness to declare his neutrality and to refuse his compliance with the requisitions of the Porte to send succours to the Turkish armies, be it in men, money, or animals.

M. Roustan employed such arguments in support of his representations as suited

[a] No.

the traditional policy of France since 1830, namely, the severance of the Regency from the Porte, by pointing out the danger it incurred by its connection with it.

The Bey and his Minister urged that a war waged against the integrity of Turkey and the destruction of the Caliphate was a matter of such vital importance to all the Mahommedan States and people, that a declaration of neutrality, involving, as it would, a refusal to aid the Sultan, would have the most disastrous consequences in a country the population of which was not only Mahommedan, but had the right, and would exact that right, to be consulted on a subject which caused profound anxiety and apprehension.

It was premature to anticipate events which might possibly compel them to come forward in person for the defence of their sacred creed and the independence of their country. With such a prospect before them, the nation could not refuse the succours demanded of it; but, at any rate, such was the actual condition of the country that the aid it could furnish was so limited indeed that it could scarcely have been less had the Regency declared its neutrality.

I had ventured to record in my despatch No. 24 of the 12th instant the conversation that had taken place between the Duc Decazes and Prince Orloff regarding the intentions of Russia with reference to Tunis, and which conversation, so far as it went, or rather so far as my information enables me to judge of its purport, evinces a disposition on the part of the French Minister for Foreign Affairs to consider the interests of this Regency as distinct from those of the Ottoman Government.

But be this as it may, in carrying out M. Decazes' instructions in the interview alluded to, M. Roustan appears to have misunderstood the drift of the observations of the Bey and of General Khaïreddin, and to have informed his Excellency that His Highness had complied with his recommendation to declare his neutrality.

The Duc Decazes, under the impression that he had succeeded in his intervention, that he had rendered a service to Russia at the same time that he had placed this country beyond an hostile attack by her fleet, lost no time in conveying to the Russian Government the information he had received from his Agent, and soon after the Russian Consul received a telegram from Prince Gortchakow desiring him to express to the Bey the high sense which the Emperor entertained of the friendly disposition of His Highness towards him.

This incident has naturally caused much embarrassment. Nevertheless, the Bey has explained to the Russian Consul, in courteous and friendly terms, the misconstruction which M. Roustan appears to have put upon his observations, as well as the connection of this country with the Porte, which rendered necessary a strict maintenance of its relations with it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 54.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 26.)
Tunis, June 25, 1877.

My Lord,

IN connection with my despatch No. 25 of 21st June, I have the honour to state that the Prime Minister has informed me that he had intimated to M. Nijssen, Dutch Consul, representing also Russia in Tunis, that it was desirable, in the presence of passing events, that he should limit, as much as possible, his personal intercourse with the Tunisian Government in his latter capacity, which he could easily do, as, owing to his age and infirmities, he scarcely calls upon the Bey more than once a year.

General Khaïreddin made the communication to him in very friendly and kind terms. He reminded him that, as M. Nijssen's family had come to Tunis upwards of a century ago, and that he was himself born here, the Tunisian Government had no wish whatever to cause him personal inconvenience, but that it expected, on his side, he would appreciate the position in which it was placed, and that he would, by maintaining a passing attitude, avoid drawing attention to his presence in Tunis.

The Russian Government has never acknowledged this Regency otherwise than as an integral part of Turkey. It has no Treaty with it, and with the exception of protecting a few Greeks it has no other interests here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 55.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 27.)

Tunis, June 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to state that in the course of a private conversation with General Hussein he mentioned to me that the Marquis of Noailles, the French Ambassador at Rome, intimated to the Italian Government, in prevision of certain eventualities to which the war between Russia and Turkey might possibly give rise, that it would be politic on the part of France and Italy to come to some agreement with reference to the partition of this Regency between them, to obviate any future misunderstanding on the subject.

I inquired of General Hussein whether he could place any reliance on the sources from which he had derived his information. He answered in the affirmative, adding that he was so convinced of its correctness that he had made use of it unreservedly in reply to the assurances of the Italian Vice-Consul at the Goletta, that his Government entertained no other but the most friendly views towards this country; and that he had, moreover, communicated the information to the Bey's Prime Minister, for his guidance in dealing with the schemes and projects submitted to him by French parties, and for which they solicit concessions.

I venture to mention the circumstance, as the inference might be drawn from it that France, or France and Italy, look upon the present war as likely to lead, if not to the immediate, at least to the eventual, dissolution of the Turkish Empire, and that they must be prepared to occupy such portions of it as may suit their national interests. It may be also that the Marquis de Noailles conceived it advisable to make the suggestion to the Cabinet of Rome, in the interest of both countries, at the time when the public press ascribed to Great Britain an intention to occupy Egypt.

General Hussein is Tunisian Minister of Public Works and Instruction, and is an officer of great merit, who has travelled extensively in Europe, America, Turkey, and Russia. He has been for the last four years in Italy, superintending a law-suit in which the Bey's Government is directly interested, and has had, therefore, ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with many Italian gentlemen in high office, who have probably given him the information in question to again draw the attention of His Highness to the designs which the Italian Government attributes to France; and which designs appear to give it umbrage, in so far as they tend to counteract those which are generally imputed to Italy.

General Hussein was very lately recalled from his mission to be consulted on matters connected with the war, but will return to Italy in the course of a few days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 56.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 156. Political.)

Bucharest, June 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship a translation of a bill which has recently passed the Roumanian Legislature, sanctioning an issue of paper money to the amount of 30,000,000 fr., guaranteed on the State domains.

This measure is extremely unpopular in the country, and the original scheme has received numerous modifications; the opposition was so great, that finally it became a point of political honour with the Cabinet to push the measure through at any price; but it is extremely doubtful whether the act will ever come into operation.

As the notes will be struck either in Brussels or Vienna, some time must elapse before they can be ready, and it is impossible to say what may be the political and financial condition of this country at three months' date.

It is difficult to predict the effect of the issue of paper money in these Principalities, and opinions are much divided as to the amount of depreciation, or whether, indeed, there may be any depreciation whatever.

The fear, of course, is entertained that, when once the printing-press is in movement, issues for further amounts may be imposed upon the Chambers. Should the

amount be confined to the very moderate sum in question, and the provisions of the Act be strictly carried out, I see no reason for apprehension in the direction of depreciation of the Roumanian currency.

M. Boerescó, a member of the Senate, who has had a good deal to say in the question, called upon me several times to discuss the matter with me; and I pointed out that an interest bearing guaranteed paper of the character of the "papiers de liquidation" in Russia and Poland was a far less objectionable form of paper money than were notes with a supposed equivalent in specie and bullion which is known to have no existence.

Of course, I impressed on M. Boerescó, that any opinion which I might express is merely a personal one, and that I had no instructions whatever to offer advice to the Roumanian Government on internal questions on the part of your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 56.

Law.

(Traduction.)

Article 1. Le Ministre des Finances est autorisé à émettre des billets hypothécaires pour la somme de 30,000,000 fr. Ces billets seront au porteur et seront reçu en paiement au pair à toutes les caisses publiques. Ils seront retirés de la circulation dans un délai déterminé. Après l'expiration de ce délai ils jouiront d'une bonification de 10 pour cent en sus de leur valeur nominale.

Art. 2. Les billets hypothécaires seront d'une valeur de 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, et 500 fr., et seront fabriqués dans les mêmes conditions que les billets de banque sous le contrôle du Ministère de Finances.

Les billets porteront les signatures *fac-simile* du Ministère des Finances et de deux Membres du Conseil Spécial, et seront paraphés par série ainsi que par la signature manuelle d'un employé, puis passés dans un registre spécial et conformément au règlement de ces billets. Ils seront ensuite livrés au Comité Spécial, qui les vérifiera et les restituera au Ministère des Finances pour les mettre en circulation.

Art. 3. Le Comité Spécial des billets hypothécaires, qui aura sa résidence au siége du Comité de la Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations, sera composé de six membres élus par ce Comité, du Président et du Directeur du Crédit Foncier Rural, et du Président de la Chambre de Commerce de Bucharest. Le Ministre des Finances fera de droit partie de ce Conseil; il le présidera lorsqu'il prendra part aux travaux de ce Conseil.

Art. 4. Les billets hypothécaires sont garantis jusqu'à leur complet retrait de la circulation, par une hypothèque de premier rang, ensuite sur les propriétés immobilières libres de l'Etat, d'une valeur d'au moins 60,000,000 fr.

Les noms des immeubles qui serviront d'hypothèque sont compris dans la liste ci-annexée.

Art. 5. Immédiatement après la promulgation de la présente loi le Comité Spécial, dont il est parlé plus haut, procèdera, d'accord avec l'Administration des Domaines, à l'évaluation de tous les immeubles ruraux hypothéqués.

L'évaluation de chaque propriété sera faite en prenant pour base la moyenne des bons des dix dernières années, multiplié par quinze. Les fôrets d'une étendue supérieure à 100 pogones n'entreront pas dans cette évaluation, et resteront libres de toute hypthèque.

Art. 6. L'inscription de l'hypothèque sera faite spécialement sur chaque immeuble en faveur des détenteurs des billets hypothécaires, sur la demande adressée aux Tribunaux de la localité où il est situé, signée par le Conseil Spécial et par l'Administration des Domaines de l'Etat.

Cette inscription sera inscrite en détail sur des listes spéciales destinées à cet effet, et sous forme résumée dans un registre pour les inscriptions hypothécaires.

Les listes recueillies formeront le registre spécial des hypothèques, des billets hypothécaires, lequel registre sera conservé par le Comité Spécial des Billets.

Le règlement concernant l'émission des billets prescrira en détail les mesures relatives à ce registre.

Art. 7. Tous les billets hypothécaires, ainsi que tous les actes et toutes les procédures que nécessitera leur émission, de même que la prise d'inscription et la

vente des hypothèques, seront exempts de toutes les taxes de timbre, enregistrements et actes.

Art. 8. Dans le cas où, "dans les deux ans à dater de la promulgation de la présente loi," le Gouvernement pourrait contracter un emprunt dans des conditions avantageuses, il est autorisé à retirer de la circulation une partie ou tous les billets hypothécaires et les payer à leur valeur nominale, en y ajoutant 10 pour cent au delà de cette valeur. Si au contraire cet emprunt ne peut pas être conclu dans le délai prescrit, le Comité Spécial mettra immédiatement en vente et successivement les immeubles hypothèques, de manière à ce que au plus tard, dans le délai de six ans à partir de la promulgation de la présente loi, tous les billets seront retirés de la circulation.

Art. 9. La vente de ces immeubles sera faite devant le Conseil Spécial des Billets, conformément à la Loi du 31 Mars, 1868.

Le prix de ces ventes sera payé intégralement et uniquement en billets hypothécaires, comptés pour 10 pour cent en sus de leur valeur nominale. Les billets retirés de la circulation de quelque manière que ce soit seront déposés au Comité Spécial, qui les annulera en les brûlant, conformément au règlement sur les billets.

Art. 10. Le Gouvernement est tenu d'élaborer un projet de loi, sur la création d'une banque d'escompte et de circulation, qu'il soumettra aux Corps Législatifs à la prochaine session. Par ce projet on règlera en même temps le sus de ce paiement des annuités de l'emprunt de 30,000,000, en la répartissant entre l'Etat et la Banque d'Escompte et de Circulation à laquelle on abandonne aussi la part de revenus affectés à l'amortissement de l'emprunt.

Art. 11. Les billets hypothécaires qui s'useront par la circulation, seront échangés contre des billets nouveaux le même numéro et sans qu'il y ait rien à prélever de leurs détenteurs. Les billets confectionnés d'après les règles prévues par l'Article 2 seront délivrés aux ayant-droits par le Ministère des Finances. Quant aux titres usés, ils seront brûlés, conformément aux prescriptions de l'Article 9.

Art. 12. Une seconde nouvelle émission de papiers ne pourra avoir lieu avant le retrait de la circulation, l'annulation et consommation par le feu de tous les billets de 30,000,000.

Art. 13. La falsification des billets hypothécaires, ainsi que tous ceux qui contribueront à l'émission d'une somme de billets supérieure à celle qu'est prévue par la présente loi, seront punis conformément à l'Article 112 et suivants du Code Pénal.

Art. 14. A l'ouverture de chaque session ordinaire, le Ministre des Finances exposera, en résumé aux Corps Législatifs, l'état des billets hypothécaires, et leur communiquera, en même temps, le rapport que lui adressera chaque année le Comité Spécial des Billets.

Art. 15. Un crédit de 100,000 fr. est ouvert au Ministère des Finances pour les frais que nécessitera la confection des billets hypothécaires.

Art. 16. Un règlement spécial, élaboré sous forme des règlements de l'Administration Publique, prescrira, en détail, toutes les mesures relatives à l'exécution de la présente loi.

Art. 17. La présente loi n'admet pas d'effets rétroactifs.

No. 57.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 2.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, June 27, 1877.*

AT the request of Prince Gortchakow, I called on his Highness to-day, and was received in the kindest manner.

His Highness expressed his deep regret at the unhappy incident connected with my reception by the Grand Duke Nicholas, and hoped that the matter would now be considered as closed.

Prince Gortchakow said that he was instructed by the Emperor to invite me to join the Imperial head-quarters in the same position as General Werder and Baron Bechtolsheim, my German and Austrian colleagues.

The Emperor, continued Prince Gortchakow, would receive me in the kindest manner; and his Highness added that, should the head-quarters of the Grand Duke Nicholas ever be joined to those of the Emperor, I should no doubt meet with an equally good reception from his Imperial Highness.

I thanked Prince Gortchakow for the kindness and frankness of his remarks, and begged him to express to the Emperor my most respectful gratitude for the gracious message which His Majesty had sent me through him.

Prince Gortchakow begged me to telegraph immediately to your Lordship, in order that the Queen and Her Majesty's Government, who had taken so much painful interest in the matter, should be informed at once of the result of my interview.

Prince Gortchakow said that he was quite ignorant of the present whereabouts of the Imperial head-quarters, but promised to communicate with me as soon as he is informed on this subject.

I cannot conclude without repeating that nothing could have been kinder or more satisfactory in every way than the manner in which I was received and spoken to by Prince Gortchakow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRED. WELLESLEY.

No. 58.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 263.)
My Lord, *Siena, June 29, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a translation of an article in the "Opinione" which treats of the neutrality of the Suez Canal, British interests in Egypt, and its possible annexation to England.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Inclosure in No. 58.

Extract from the "Opinione."

(Translation.)

THE NEUTRALITY OF THE SUEZ CANAL.

THE interests of the populations who live on the coasts of the Adriatic and of the Mediterranean are common to England: the neutralization of the Suez Canal. Austria-Hungary, France, and Italy cannot but help in all endeavours to achieve this end. Egypt is a vice-kingdom connected by historical chains to Turkey. The Viceroy has never refused to help the Sultan with money and with troops. When the war broke out with Servia he paid loyally the double tribute, and now, although his own interior confines are not secure, he pays it again. He hopes thus, as a reward for his assistance, to obtain for himself complete independence. But what would happen if the Russians occupied the Canal, or blocked its entrance, or disembarked troops in Egypt? This is the question mooted by the English, not only by diplomats and statesmen, but by all the many interested in the navigation of the Canal.

Three Russian men-of-war were in French ports. Where have they gone to? Who believes that they have returned to the Baltic; who suspects them of being in the Mediterranean on the look out for the Egyptian contingent bound for Turkey? However, the possibility of this latter hypothesis gravely preoccupies England, who asks herself, What would happen if, during the war in the East, the Russians should give chase to the Egyptian contingents? They would necessarily touch at the Suez Canal, and the neutrality would be broken. The doubts are most grave, and would merit that, to clear them up, all the maritime Powers in the south of Europe should co-operate. These great maritime routes are necessary channels for the respiration and circulation of the blood of the Continents. It is not lawful for any belligerent State to impede the motion and the life. But this new danger brings forward the convenience of new international declarations. As has been done for passages of less importance, as, for example, the Scheldt, should be done for the Suez Canal.

Its perpetual neutrality would be the most evident proof of its high importance. But would the English accept this proposal? We greatly fear that they would aspire in Egypt to become masters, and not neutralizers. Anyhow, under present circumstances this their wish for domination pleases us. The Russians have been warned in

every way that the day that a ship of war presents itself to close the Canal and to demand a passport from neutral vessels England would not tolerate this insult, and the English fleet in the Mediterranean would clear the way, which from Gibraltar, from Malta to Island of Perin, and to Aden is entirely closed by English fortresses.

The "Times" says: "Supposing, however, that Russia had the right to blockade the Canal, we should intervene, not because we wish to contest the right, but because it could not be done without damaging us in an intolerable way. We should not intervene because of offence against our quality of neutral Power, but because of offence against us as the State in possession of India—the State which is disposed rather to fight than to submit."

This is quite clear, and the notice may be salutary. The English admonish the Russians that any attack on the Canal, which is the road to India, would be a *casus belli*. Here is shown again the great intuition as regarded the future which the Disraeli Cabinet had when it bought the Canal shares and sent its functionaries to occupy Egypt, because it foresaw the war between Russia and Turkey, and there is not a doubt that the day that Russia advances too far into Asia Minor or towards Constantinople, the English would occupy the Canal; and perhaps in the long provisions into the future who could say that Egypt, occupied and annexed to England, would not be a mean of settling the Eastern question? It would not be a solution favourable to the interests of Italy, France, and Austria; but it must be faced resolutely, and meditated on by our diplomacy, so that it may not come upon us unawares.

No. 59.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 3.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 2 Juillet*, 1877.

LA division Russe qui opérait du côté d'Alichguerd, obligée de se replier à la suite des attaques victorieuses de nos troupes, commet partout sur son passage des actes de cruauté et de barbarie. Tous les villages, Musulmans ou Chrétiens, visités par ce corps d'armée Russe sont incendiés, après avoir été indignement dévastés et livrés au pillage. Non contents de ces méfaits, les Russes ont impitoyablement tué trois femmes inoffensives. Ces faits, qui nous sont signalés par le Commandant de Van, sont confirmés par des télégrammes des correspondants des journaux étrangers se trouvant en Asie.

No. 60.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 223.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 3, 1877.*

I HAVE received following from Sir Arnold Kemball:—

"The army of Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha has been completely victorious along the whole line from Delibaba to Zewin; the Russian left wing, which was in the Darbogas of Delibaba, was forced after a severe defeat to retire on Tahir. On Monday Russians attacked Turks in position at Zewin with twenty battalions of infantry, twenty-four field guns, and some regiments of cavalry. The assaults continued for eight hours, when the Turkish troops, having bravely sustained the attack, repulsed the Russians with very great loss in killed and wounded, who were left on the field. In the battle Ferik Muhlis Pasha was wounded. After the battle the Russians retired on Ghelli Doof, where they await reinforcements. It now appears that the Russians have not more than twenty-eight battalions. Mukhtar Pasha went to Delibaba with a small reinforcement for the right wing, to organise it in a way to effectually oppose the Russian left wing. After doing this he returned this Thursday to Zewin, and I am with him."

No. 61.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 224.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 3, 1877.*

I DIRECTED Vice-Consul Sankey to make inquiries on the spot as to reported massacres of Christians in the Dobrudscha. He telegraphs to me that the reports on this subject are much exaggerated, and that no persons have been killed.

No. 62.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

(Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, July 3, 1877.*

I HAVE just seen an American correspondent direct from Widdin, who is thoroughly trustworthy.

The garrison, 25,000 strong, is in a wretched state; 3 lbs. of rice per day for ten men; eighty-six field-pieces, for which they have hardly teams for forty.

Troops all militia, and with old percussion rifles; no cavalry, except a few hundred Circassians in uniform of regular army; but eighteen Krupp guns in the works.

Camp at Widdin is in complete ignorance of what is going on elsewhere.

No. 63.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 3.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, July 3, 1877.*

PRINCE MILAN has opened last night Servian Assembly with Speech.

Majority favour peace and Ministers.

It is reported that Roumanian force has crossed Danube above Widdin, at a little distance from Servian frontier.

Sent to Constantinople.

No. 64.

Consul Richetts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 4, 1·20 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tiflis, July 3, 1877, 8·55 P.M.*

THREE thousand of the 41st arrived from Poti, and went July 2 to Alexandropol. On the 26th ultimo, there were only 13,000 regular infantry at Kars.

No. 65.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 225.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 3, 1877.*

FOLLOWING from Consul at Erzeroum, dated July 2:—

"On Friday Russians were attacked by Mukhtar Pasha at Haligaz, and, after severe action, driven from their intrenchments with reported loss of 3,000; Turkish loss 2,000. Russians now hold position at Zakopkiun, nine miles in the rear. Russian corps of about 18,000 is marching from centre towards Yenikeui, supposed object being to attack Moukhtar Pasha in the rear. Turks have detached eighteen battalions to meet it. Moukhtar Pasha was on Saturday preparing to push in pursuit of Russian left wing."

No. 66.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 226.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 3, 1877.*

FROM Consul at Erzeroum, dated July 3, morning:—

"The sudden and, as yet, unaccountable retreat of Russians I announced in my telegram *en clair* may be a feint to draw Turks out of their intrenchments. Commander-in-chief even states he cannot understand reason. He is, however, in pursuit, and has ordered authorities here to keep him well supplied with provisions and ammunition as he advances. He will probably enter Kars to-day. At Bayazid, Koords have massacred part of the Russian garrison and most of the Christians there and in contiguous villages. Faik Pasha was unable to restrain them. Van, Moush, Bitlis, in distressed condition from outrages by Koords. State of siege proclaimed here yesterday."

No. 67.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 4.)

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, July 3, 1877.*

SULEIMAN PASHA and staff are expected here to-morrow on their way to Constantinople, or one of the two other seats of war. They will probably be followed by some of the troops here.

No. 68.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 227.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 4, 1877.*

BLUHM PASHA and several officers have arrived at Gallipoli with a view to fortification of the lines.

No. 69.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 228.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 4, 1877, 4 P.M.*

FOLLOWING from Consul at Erzeroum dated Tuesday noon:—

"On Monday and Tuesday of last week Russians bombarded Kars very heavily; on Wednesday fire ceased; same day general retreat of Russians along whole line commenced; on Saturday and Sunday Turkish right wing attacked Russian left near Karakalissa, and gained both actions. After last engagement Russians retreated hastily, leaving their dead on field, abandoning over 140,000 lbs. of flour and biscuit, burning camp equipages and destroying ammunition, taking with them 740 carts with wounded. Russian column before Zivin on retiring was followed closely by Moukhtar Pasha, who is now close to Zaim, where they appear to be concentrating. Kars regarded free."

No. 70.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 4.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Very Confidential.) *Vienna, July 4, 1877.*

THE Turkish Ambassador tells me that on his asking Count Andrassy, by instructions from the Porte, to remonstrate at St. Petersburgh against devastation with which the war is carried on, his Excellency declined to interfere, but took credit to himself for having secured the neutrality of Servia and for being prepared to influence the consequences of the war.

No. 71.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 4, 1877.*

TO what places does the question in your telegram No. 218 refer? It is as a rule desirable that Consular Officers of all ranks should remain at their posts unless absolutely forced to leave them.

No. 72.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 2. Political.)
Ragusa, June 26, 1877.

My Lord,

ON the 20th instant I had the honour to telegraph to your Lordship that the Montenegrins had been defeated, and that their condition had become hopeless.

Those of my colleagues accredited to the Prince of Montenegro, on receiving the above information, at once telegraphed to Cettigné to inquire whether the condition of the Principality was really such as to necessitate an interference by the Great Powers.

The official answer they received was that the Princess, on being questioned on the subject, replied, "As long as the Prince has any fighting men left, the condition of Montenegro cannot be considered hopeless; the war will consequently be carried on 'à outrance.'"

Though the Montenegrins sustained several defeats in their encounters with Suleiman Pasha, who successfully effected the re-victualling of Nicksich, and a junction with Ali Saib at Spuz, they were more fortunate on the Albanian frontier, where Petrowitch, at the head of 2,000 men, is said to have gained a victory, and to have impeded Ali Saib in forming a junction with Suleiman Pasha.

It is now probable that the Montenegrins will avail themselves of the absence of Turkish forces on their northern frontier, with the view to entering the Herzegovina, where they hope to incite the inhabitants to a general rise, and to attack the Turkish army in the rear.

The opinion is also prevalent that the Porte will now rest satisfied with its recent victories, and that, seeing the futility of further bloodshed by waging war for the sake of a few barren rocks, they will withdraw their forces and utilize them there where they are soon likely to be most wanted.

In stating the above facts and opinions, I venture to point out to your Lordship that I merely repeat what has been imparted to me by my colleagues, who, being accredited to the Prince of Montenegro, and in direct official communication with the Government at Cettigné, possess facilities for obtaining information which, though more trustworthy, must naturally be less recent than that supplied by persons on the spot, such as newspaper correspondents.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 73.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 5.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 1 Juillet*, 1877.

JE m'empresse de vous communiquer ci-après le télégramme que le Commandant d'Ada-Kalé vient de nous adresser. En présence des assurances formelles et réitérées du Gouvernement d'Autriche-Hongrie, nous n'avons pris aucune disposition militaire en vue du passage éventuel des Russes en Servie. Veuillez entretenir Lord Derby du contenu de ce télégramme, et me télégraphier immédiatement la réponse de sa Seigneurie.

Voici le télégramme sus-mentionné :—

"J'ai l'honneur de vous informer que vingt canons et munitions sont arrivés à Cladova. Un bateau acheté par les Russes est parti avant-hier de Turno-Sévérin pour le Bas-Danube, en équipage et capitaine Russes. On prépare un pont vis-à-vis de Timok pour passer 100,000 hommes. L'armée Russe est concentré entre Courajа et Tourno-Magoréli. L'Empereur y est déjà arrivé."

No. 74.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 5.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 3 Juillet*, 1877.

LE journal "La France," de Paris, publie dans son numéro du 21 Juin une note qui aurait été adressée aux Agents des Puissances à Bucharest, en date du 15 Juin, par M. Cogalniceano, dans laquelle il est affirmé que les autorités supérieures des forces Ottomanes du Danube ont donné l'ordre aux Commandants des troupes de ne pas faire quartier aux soldats Roumains.

Je vous prie d'opposer le démenti le plus absolu et le plus énergique à cette affirmation, qui est un outrage à l'armée Impériale.

En faisant ressortir tout l'odieux et toute la déloyauté de pareilles dénonciations volontairement mensongères, vous voudrez bien relever avec non moins d'énergie l'indigne imputation contenue dans la même pièce, et qui accuse les corps de Circassiens et de volontaires de massacrer les bergers, les femmes, et les enfants.

Il est nécessaire que l'Europe impartiale connaisse les procédés de diffamation auxquels le Gouvernement des Principautés-Unies ne craint pas de recourir contre le Gouvernement Suzerain.

No. 75.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 573.)

My Lord, *Paris, July 4*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to send your Lordship herewith, for what it may be worth, information brought to-day to the Chancery of the Embassy by a Mr. P. F. Palmer, who is not known at this Embassy, but who states himself to be known to Lord Tenterden.*

It relates to a purchase stated to have been made by the Russians of explosive shells, having the appearance of lumps of coal, to be shipped as coal from Gibraltar, and sent to Constantinople, in the hope that they may be received on board Turkish ships of war, and explode on board when used as coal.

It is insinuated that they may be intended for the British fleet also.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

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* Mr. Palmer is a man who was employed by the Spanish Legation as a sort of spy in Carlist affairs. We absolutely refused to have anything to do with him here, and I told him so on one occasion. He is a most disreputable person, and was concerned in a disgraceful lawsuit arising out of his Carlist transactions.—TENTERDEN.

Inclosure in No. 75.

Memorandum respecting "Coal Shells" for Turkish Fleet.

MR. H. P. F. PALMER, whose Paris address is 10, Rue La Fontaine, Auteuil, and whose London address is 8, Duchess Street, Portland Place, and who says that he has been employed by the Spanish Government to get information about Carlist movements during the late war, wishes to tell your Excellency that he hears, on good authority, that the Russian Government have bought a quantity of "coal-shells" (shells made in the shape of pieces of coal and filled with dynamite and sawdust), which were made in 1873 by the Carlists to be introduced on board Spanish ships of war, and which are now at a small place near Santander. These shells are to be sent by land to Gibraltar, and are expected to arrive there towards the end of next week. They are to be shipped on board colliers touching at Gibraltar, which belong to a Cardiff firm trading with Constantinople, and are intended for the Turkish fleet. Mr. Palmer supposes that they may also be meant for the British fleet.

Mr. Palmer says that he can easily get a specimen here for about 100 fr., and that he gives this information for what it may be worth. He states that he is known to Lord Tenterden and to the Board of Trade, and the reasons he gave for not writing himself to the Foreign Office was that he thought it was too late in the day. He said he was going to London on Saturday next.

I remember Mr. Palmer coming to the Legation last year at Madrid with a story of a conspiracy to kill King Alfonso. Mr. Layard told the Spanish Government, and I think wrote home about it. Mr. Palmer told me that he is on the worst terms with the Spanish Embassy here.

Paris, July 4, 1877.

No. 76.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 574. Very Confidential.)

My Lord, *Paris, July 4*, 1877.

COUNT MÜNSTER, the German Ambassador at Her Majesty's Court, arrived here from London the day before yesterday, and set out again, I believe, this morning, on his way to Gastein.

He came to see me yesterday and spoke to me at length on the Eastern question, but it is unnecessary for me to repeat to your Lordship observations which you must have heard already from his own lips.

The Duc Decazes told me this morning that Count Münster had spoken to him of terms on which Russia would be eventually willing to make peace, which had been propounded to Her Majesty's Government by his Russian colleague, Count Schouvaloff.

The Duke said that he considered these terms as moderate, and as likely to facilitate the conclusion of peace.

In the first place in Asia Russia seemed not to require more than Batoum, and the plateau commanding it. The Duke had, he said, expressed to Count Münster the hope that Russia would not make any demand for Kars also. To do this would, he had said, remind the English unpleasantly of Khiva. Count Münster had replied that he understood that there was no question of Kars; at all events it seemed, the Duc Decazes thought, that the very utmost the Russians would ask for in Asia would be Kars.

As regarded Europe, the Russians simply proposed to establish an autonomous province between the south bank of the Danube and the Balkans. It would, the Duke thought, be rather to the advantage of Europe that the Danube should run between two neutral States, such as the New Province and Roumania. This would tend to secure the navigation of the river from interruption.

It was true that one barrier between Russia and Constantinople would be thus, in some sort, done away with, but the Balkans would remain. Count Münster had, indeed, spoken of a demand from Russia that not only the Turkish fortresses on the Danube, but those on the Balkans also, should be razed, but this latter part of the demand would not, the Duke supposed, be insisted upon.

As regarded the Straits, Count Münster had said that the Russians positively

objected to their being simply thrown open to ships-of-war of all nations. What the Russians required was that they should be absolute masters of the Black Sea, in short, that the Straits should be absolutely closed, and that the Black Sea should be a Russian lake. To effect this, they would, Count Münster had affirmed, be quite willing that England should establish a Gibraltar at Gallipoli on the Dardanelles, provided that they themselves were authorized to establish forts at the entrance of the Bosphorus from the Black Sea.

The Duc Decazes had, he said, observed to Count Münster that this notion of English and Russian forts on the Straits was simply preposterous; and Count Münster admitted that it was simply an expression in extreme terms of Russian views.

The Duke went on to say that the conclusion he drew from it was that Russia would be probably contented with some such arrangement as that which existed before the Treaty of Paris, and in virtue of which the Straits were closed to ships of war of all nations, so long as Turkey was at peace.

The Duke did not speak as if he was aware that Russia had any intention of making the autonomous Bulgaria extend to the south of the Balkans.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 77.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 575. Confidential.)
Paris, July 4, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes said to me this morning that he had heard with great pleasure that the English fleet had been ordered to Besika Bay, because he hoped that this would be regarded in England as a sufficient demonstration, and that Her Majesty's Government would not take any further steps.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 78.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

Scutari, July 4, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

I BELIEVE that the Turkish Commanders would be glad if by any means peace negotiations could be opened with Montenegro, and thus a stop put to impending attempt to reach Cettigné.

No. 79.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

Bucharest, July 4, 1877, 4 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

It is probable that Roumanian army will attempt passage of Danube at Florentina, a little higher than Kalafat, next Sunday. Bridging material is ready and in course of transport from Grain.

No. 80.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

Scutari, July 2, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

BY my telegram of yesterday *en clair*, your Lordship will have probably understood that the Turks were decided to assume the defensive here. I have just seen Suleiman Pasha, and I now have every reason to believe that the Porte would not be unwilling to come to an arrangement with Montenegro for the cessation of hostilities.

It is not improbable, in face of the losses sustained by Montenegro, that the Prince is animated with the same wish, but is unaware of the change in the intentions of the Turks towards him. If your Lordship should approve, I could easily go to Cettigné, as the transport of the grain is about to be renewed, and in quite an unofficial and most guarded manner express my belief there that the Turks are disposed to treat with His Highness, and an opening might be thus made for bringing to an end the useless effusion of blood going on here.

Telegraphed to Constantinople.

No. 81.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 229.)
(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, July 4, 1877, 7 P.M.

SULTAN asks me to state to Her Majesty's Government that he has a number of Russian prisoners, officers and men, and that he has given orders for them to be treated with every kindness and consideration. He wishes to be informed through Her Majesty's Embassy at St. Petersburgh, as Her Majesty's Government has kindly undertaken to protect Turkish subjects in Russia, whether Turkish prisoners are properly treated there.

No. 82.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 230.)
(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, July 5, 1877.

I SAW the Sultan privately yesterday. I urged on him the absolute necessity of taking measures for the protection of lives and property of Christians from Circassians, Kurds, and others. He assured me that he had heard of their excesses with great grief, and that he had given the most peremptory orders that steps should be taken to put an immediate stop to them, and those orders should be repeated.

His Majesty said the Russians were adopting a policy in Bulgaria which might lead to very grave results. They were distributing arms and ammunition among the Christians and calling on them to rise, threatening them with death if they refused. He told me he intended to issue a proclamation assuring the Bulgarians of his protection, promising them good and just government, and the greatest security for their district and political rights, threatening with treatment as rebels those who were taken in arms and offering an asylum in the Schumla quadrilateral or elsewhere to old men, women, and children. I strongly advised him to be conciliatory and moderate, and to avoid threatening language, which might produce an unfavourable effect abroad.

He said that he had expressed to Bulgarian Exarch, whom he had seen, his true sentiments with regard to Bulgarians, and had authorized him to communicate them to his people. His Majesty spoke very strongly with regard to atrocities attributed to Russians, saying that he had directed his Ministers to call attention of European foreign Powers to them, so that the world might judge who were the barbarians.

Sultan expressed much satisfaction at the presence of the fleet in Besika Bay, and asked why it had been sent there; but as I told him I was not authorized to make any communication to him on the subject, he did not ask any further questions.

No. 83.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 5.)

(No. 231.)
(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, July 5, 1877.

WITH reference to Colonel Mansfield's telegram transmitted to me yesterday by your Lordship, the information we have received here from Widdin does not tally with that furnished by American correspondent. However, I will inquire at once of Lennox.

No. 84.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 5.*)

(No. 232.)
(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, July 5, 1877.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, I have been asked the question by Consular Agents at Rustchuk, and Kustendji, Erzeroum, and elsewhere.

I will instruct them to remain at their posts as long as possible.

No. 85.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 5.*)

(No. 233.)
(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, July 5, 1877.

FOLLOWING from Sir A. Kemball, date Millidoy, July 3:—

"Upon information that Russians had retired from Savi Kamish in direction of Kars, Mukhtar Pasha broke up camp at Zewin Saturday. Moves on to-day to Savi Kamish. Caucasus reported here to be in full revolt, and Russian army supposed to be retiring on frontier. Hence this movement.

No. 86.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 5.*)

(No. 234.)
(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, July 5, 1877.

SERVIAN Agent informs me that, in pursuance of instructions from his Government, he gave, last night, the most distinct assurances to Porte that the visit of the Prince to the Emperor of Russia had in no respect changed the attitude of Servia towards Turkey, and that Servia had no intention to take any part in the war, under present circumstances.

Servian Agent adds that Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed himself satisfied with these assurances.

No. 87.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Blunt.

(No. 2. Political.)
Foreign Office, July 5, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 28, Political, of the 19th ultimo, relating to the question of the non-payment by the Porte of the stipends promised to the priests of the destroyed villages in the Sandjak of Philippopolis; and I have to state to you that I approve your own and Vice-Consul Calvert's proceedings in this matter, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 88.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Blunt.

(No. 3.)
Foreign Office, July 5, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 29, Political, of the 20th ultimo, inclosing reports from Vice-Consul Dupuis upon the state of affairs in the Caza of Demotica, and I have to state to you that I approve your having directed Mr. Dupuis to proceed there to report upon the state of the district.

I have further to request that you will convey to Mr. Dupuis my approval of the manner in which he has discharged the duty entrusted to him.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 89.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 273.)
Foreign Office, July 5, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to Mr. Consul Sandwith's despatch No. 37, Political, of the 18th ultimo, copy of which has been forwarded to your Excellency, I have to instruct you to call the attention of the Porte to the action of the local authorities in Crete, who have refused permission to Cretans to leave the island without special leave, although it would appear that no orders to this effect have been issued by the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 90.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sandwith.

(No. 8. Political.)
Foreign Office, July 5, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 34, Political, of the 12th ultimo, commenting upon Mr. Vice-Consul Calocherinos' recent Report respecting acts of sacrilege and other outrages, of which Turkish soldiers are stated to have been guilty in the eastern part of the Island of Crete; and I have to state to you that I entirely approve the pains which you have taken to verify Mr. Calocherinos' statements, and to guard against exaggerations in the reports forwarded to Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 91.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 272.)
Foreign Office, July 5, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 269 of the 28th ultimo, I have to acquaint your Excellency that the Russian Ambassador has communicated to me the substance of a telegram which he has received from Prince Gortchakow on the subject of the destruction of the British Consulate at Rustchuk by shells from the Russian batteries on the other side of the Danube.

The explanation given by his Highness states that the bombardment was carried on from so great a distance that no flag could be distinguished. He adds that the Russian military authorities disclaim any possibility of the aim being intentional, and he cites the destruction by the Turks of the Gymnasium at Giurgevo, on which the red-cross flag was hoisted, as a case of the same kind.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 92.

Lord Tenterden to the Hon. C. J. Vivian.

(Very Confidential.)
Foreign Office, July 5, 1877.

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a despatch from Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley,* forwarding information respecting the state of the Russian army on the Danube, and reporting his own movements since the date of his interview with the Grand Duke Nicholas; and I have to request that, in laying the same before Mr. Secretary Hardy, you will state to him that Lord Derby proposes, with his concur-

* No. 29.

rence, to approve Colonel Wellesley's conduct in remaining at Bucharest in plain clothes while awaiting instructions from Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 93.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 39. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, June 23, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship the dissolution on the 18th instant of the Cretan General Assembly, which had been convoked on the 7th ultimo. Since the 15th of that month no sitting had taken place, as the Christian members had refused to discuss any subject until their demands for a liberal extension of the Organic Law had been complied with. On the afternoon of the 18th instant Samih Pasha called the Assembly together again, and exhorted them once more to elect the members of the Administrative Council and the Court of Appeal, a duty which annually devolves upon them. On their persisting in their refusal to do so, the President formally dissolved the Assembly, telling the members that he would communicate to them the answer of the Porte to their demand after a brief delay. On the following day the Christian Deputies sent in a Protest to the President, of which I have the honour to inclose a translation.

From this document it would appear that the Deputies had understood that the Governor had already communicated to them the Porte's refusal (which his Excellency denies having done), and they recur to the circumstances under which the Organic Law was accorded, but which has been violated in several important particulars. They recall the fact that last year, Réouf Pasha, the then Governor, had expressed to them his opinion that many of their demands were most just and reasonable (which is strictly true), but that, nevertheless, they meet with a blank refusal. They do not allow this opportunity to escape of protesting anew against the island being assimilated with the rest of the Empire by the proclamation of the Constitution. Though their hopes of ameliorating their lot by procuring an extension of privileges to the Christians had again been frustrated, they conclude by saying that they have still the consolation of reflecting that the decision of the Government is not irrevocable, seeing that their Sovereign has the prerogative of hereafter sanctioning their demands.

His Excellency made some difficulty about receiving this Protest, because it is therein assumed that their demands had been refused. Though a categorical denial of them, indeed, had not been given, no doubt remained on the minds of any of the Deputies that a refusal was a foregone conclusion; and it was suspected, indeed, that martial law was soon to be proclaimed.

On the morning of the 21st the Pasha again summoned the Deputies to his presence, and told them that he had just received a telegram from the Grand Vizier, conveying the commands of His Majesty the Sultan, that they should choose five members from each community to proceed to Constantinople, in order to discuss with the Porte the changes in the Organic Law proposed by them, and in addition, ordering them to proceed without delay to the election of the members of the Appellate Court and of the Administrative Council.

The Christians objected that, as his Excellency had already dissolved the Assembly, they had no longer any legal corporate existence, and could not therefore act in the name of their constituents. On hearing this objection, Samih Pasha expressed his willingness to prolong the existence of the Assembly for two days, in order to enable them to carry out His Majesty's orders. The Christian Deputies desired a few hours to consider the proposal, and having retired to discuss it among themselves, they met again at the Governor's konak in the afternoon, and declared that the Assembly having been dissolved, they could not consider themselves as constituting a legal Assembly representing the nation, and that holding that view, they could not consistently elect the five members as was desired of them. They ventured, however, to make a counter-proposal, viz., that the Porte should send a special Commission to Crete, where their demands could be discussed with more advantage to all parties. Samih Pasha reproached the Deputies with disobedience to the commands of their Sovereign, and declined to transmit their proposal to his Government.

Both sides having thus failed to come to an understanding, the Deputies retired, and dispatched a telegram addressed to His Majesty the Sultan, through the channel of the Grand Vizier, conceived in the following sense:—

They respectfully pray His Majesty to be allowed to request the sending to Crete of a special Mixed Commission, acquainted with Greek, as was done by His Majesty's father (in 1858), instead of their sending five persons to the capital themselves. In this manner they would be able to discuss their demands with the Commission and with their Mussulman fellow-countrymen, whose prosperity they desire. Four of the most influential Deputies refused to make even the concession, if concession it can be considered, and were for breaking off all negotiations.

The next morning most of the Deputies from Sphakéa and this end of the Island were already on their way home, and the rest will depart by the steamer which leaves for Rethymo and Candia to-morrow night.

The Imperial order for a Deputation to proceed to the capital, coming as it did after the Assembly had broken up, had no chance of being obeyed from the very first, as it was looked upon as a mere device to gain time. The Government has come to be regarded with such distrust in consequence of its frequent breaches of faith, that there was only one influential voice among the 42 Christian members raised in favour of making this last attempt at a peaceful solution of their differences with the Porte the Sphakians, in particular, were against any fresh transaction, and their decision given, no wavering was any longer possible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Inclosure in No. 93.

Protest of Christian Deputies of Cretan General Assembly addressed to Samih Pasha.

(Traduction.)

A son Excellence Samih Pacha, Gouverneur-Général de l'Ile de Crète.

Excellence,

C'EST avec un respectueux regret que les Soussignés, Députés Chrétiens, ont appris par votre Excellence que la Sublime Porte a pris cette année, comme l'année dernière, la décision de rejeter les modifications qui lui ont été soumises. Elle persiste ainsi à refuser justice aux Chrétiens de l'île et à conserver une position privilégiée à la minorité Ottomane de la population. Nous avions été surpris de la réponse apportée en Crète par son Excellence Kadri Bey. Aujourd'hui nous avons l'obligation de protester contre celle qui nous est communiquée par votre Excellence. Ce qui pouvait l'année passée être considéré comme un acte d'indifférence de l'autorité devient aujourd'hui clairement du favoritisme.

La Sublime Porte avait provoqué pendant la révolution de 1866 le rapatriement des familles Chrétiennes réfugiées en Grèce, et amené la soumission des combattants, en promettant d'exécuter la Loi Organique qu'elle venait de publier. L'Europe Chrétienne, dont les bâtiments de guerre avaient servi au transport de nos familles, avait applaudi à cette sage mesure, qui lui avait été communiquée. Persuadé que Sa Majesté avait la ferme intention d'améliorer le sort des Chrétiens suivant les principes contenus dans la Loi Organique, elle avait conseillé à nos réfugiés de regagner leur patrie.

La forme de Gouvernement qui nous avait été octroyée dans ces circonstances et à laquelle Aali Pacha dans son rapport au Sultan donnait la qualification d'administration autonome (self-government) ne devait en aucun cas être violée ou modifiée sans la coopération du peuple. Cependant, après sa promulgation, différents Gouverneurs, agissant contre la volonté du Souverain, en ont violé plusieurs dispositions, sur la limitation des provinces, les impôts, l'inviolabilité des Députés, la distribution de la justice. Dernièrement encore l'autorité s'efforçait d'identifier, au moyen de la Constitution, la Crète aux autres Puissances, et d'abolir nos anciens priviléges. Le peuple Chrétien de Crète a protesté énergiquement contre cette tendance, et c'est pour éviter toute tentative semblable et pour développer dans des justes proportions, selon les besoins et les progrès de la civilisation, les principes contenus dans la Loi Organique qu'on avait soumis respectueusement à la Sublime Porte les modifications rejetées. Les Députés Chrétiens de cette année, formant la majorité de l'Assemblée Générale,

pour appuyer la Loi Organique et les modifications proposées les ont renouvelées, et ont protesté contre l'application de la Constitution en Crète.

En maintenant contre toute justice la minorité Ottomane dans la position privilégiée qu'elle avait lors de la conquête, le pouvoir prouve clairement sa partialité en faveur des Musulmans. Cette façon d'agir, contraire aux volontés nettement exprimées de Sa Majesté le Sultan, est d'autant plus triste qu'elle est inspirée par ceux dont la charge est de faire régner la concorde.

Le peuple Chrétien voit avec peine qu'il ne lui est pas donné de vivre en harmonie avec les Musulmans, ceux-ci se souvenant de traditions vieilles, tandis que les Chrétiens, soumis à un même Souverain, doivent avoir les mêmes droits, ainsi que l'indique les exigeances du siècle civilisé dans lequel nous vivons. Nous avions été autorisés officiellement l'année passée par le Gouvernement Impérial à lui soumettre les modifications déjà connues. Son Excellence Réouf Pacha avait reconnu le bien fondé des demandes des Chrétiens, et avait promis à leurs Représentants l'acceptation du plus grand nombre d'entre elles par la Sublime Porte, s'engageant à les appuyer en se transportant même de sa personne à Constantinople, s'il en était besoin. Mais il avait remis à une autre époque l'élection des membres du Conseil Administratif et de la Cour d'Appel. Cette remise de l'année passée et celle de cette année laissent l'île sans Conseillers et Juges légalement élus, ce qui jette la confusion dans l'autorité et produit le relâchement de l'action gouvernementale. Enfin la Constitution a aboli le système d'autonomie locale et les priviléges contenus dans la Loi Organique qui reconnait la langue Grecque, qui est celle de la majorité des habitants, comme langue officielle, et qui admet des impôts fixes et invariables. Le peuple Chrétien a déjà protesté, et proteste par notre voie contre toute unification.

Votre Excellence nous a donné, il est vrai, des promesses verbales. A l'exécution de ces promesses s'oppose la minorité Musulmane, qui a pour principe de conduite de profiter des priviléges accordés aux Chrétions, après avoir combattu ceux-ci les armes à la main quand ils les demandaient. Ce principe erroné les entraine aussi à s'opposer systématiquement à toutes les demandes des Chrétiens, et à envoyer un Député Musulman à la Chambre des Représentants à Constantinople, bien que celle-ci n'ait pas à s'immiscer dans les affaires de l'île.

Nous avions l'espérance justifiée de retourner dans nos foyers porteurs de bonnes nouvelles. Nous espérions pouvoir annoncer à nos mandants que leurs droits imprescriptibles étaient reconnus, que nos demandes étaient acceptées, demandes basées sur le développement régulier de notre loi. Nous comptions alors que le peuple aurait manifesté sa reconnaissance au pouvoir.

Aujourd'hui il nous reste la consolante pensée que le refus de l'autorité n'est pas irrévocable, qu'il n'existe qu'une confusion passagère que saura faire disparaître la bonne volonté du Monarque.

Nous attendrons l'intervention dans cette affaire de Sa Majesté. Placé en dehors de la Constitution dont la Crète est exceptée, le Monarque saura faire usage de sa haute initiative et sanctionner les demandes du peuple Chrétien, basées sur la justice et l'égalité.

Jusque là, gardiens vigilants de nos droits, nous dénoncerons toute illégalité.

Veuillez, &c.

(Suivent les signatures des 42 Députés Chrétiens).

No. 94.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 6.)

(No. 40. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Canea, Crete, June* 23, 1877.

EVERYTHING had seemed to forebode that after the breaking up of the Cretan General Assembly no very long time would elapse before the standard of rebellion would be raised. This anticipation has been somewhat modified by the news brought from Athens by the last week's steamer. It would appear that the present Coalition Ministry are bringing great pressure to bear on the two secret Committees sitting at the Greek capital, and have induced them to forego, for a time at least, their revolutionary designs.

These Committees, which have all along been in close correspondence with the leading Cretans, assuring them of their active co-operation as soon as the moment for action should arrive, have now written earnestly deprecating any premature movement,

and entreating them to abandon any immediate attempt at rebellion. This counsel cannot fail to have great weight with the responsible Chiefs, because the Cretans are dependent on the Committees for all their warlike supplies. It has caused, nevertheless, intense disappointment and disgust among the more impatient spirits. The Sphakians in particular are sick at heart at this deferring of their hopes, and I hear that the feeling which prevails among them is so strong as to cause grave fears lest they should precipitate the revolt which they have so long been brooding over. It is, therefore, quite uncertain whether the cooler heads of the more experienced Chiefs will succeed in keeping the present excitements under, or whether it will burst out at the instigation of the more hot-headed leaders. What seems certain is, that nothing short of very large and speedy concessions by the Porte will suffice to ward off the danger of another Cretan insurrection in the course of the present summer.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 95.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 6.)

(No. 41. Political.)

My Lord, *Canea, Crete, June* 23, 1877.

IN my despatch No. 38 of the 19th instant, I had the honour to inform your Lordship, on the authority of the Consular Agent at Rethymo, that certain villages in that district had refused to pay their tithes. It appears that this refusal had not the importance which M. Trifilli had at first attached to it. The tax-gatherer of those parts is most unpopular with the Christian villagers, and when he made his unwelcome appearance among them, they addressed him in language of defiance which seemed to forebode a breach of the peace, but nothing serious has come of it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 96.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 6.)

(No. 691.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June* 29, 1877.

I SPOKE to the Grand Vizier two days ago of the importance of preventing excesses on the part of the Turkish troops in Montenegro, and of treating the Montenegrins with humanity and generosity. His Highness replied that the most stringent orders had been given to the Turkish commanders to that effect, and he trusted that that part of the population of the Principality which was not in arms would be respected and be protected from violence and outrage. But, he added, he could not feel sure that the horrible atrocities committed by the Montenegrins upon their prisoners would not lead to acts of retaliation. His Highness then gave me a description of the shocking manner in which a number of Turkish soldiers had been mutilated. Could we be surprised, he asked, that men who saw their brethren so maltreated should be driven into committing acts of revenge? In no country, even the most civilized, could it be otherwise.

The similarity between the histories of the Circassians and Montenegrins must, no doubt, have struck your Lordship. Some forty years ago the Circassians were the heroes of the day. Their indomitable courage in resisting the attempts of Russia to conquer their country and their ardent love of liberty were the themes of the historians and poets of the time. They are now seen in their true colours, and are the objects of universal, and, perhaps, just execration. The romance which now makes heroes of the Montenegrins is probably destined to the same fate.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 97.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 602.)

Therapia, June 29, 1877.

My Lord,

THE missing despatch of Sir Arnold Kemball, giving an account of the battle of Tahir, in which the right wing of the Turkish army in Armenia was defeated, reached me to-day, having, I have no doubt, been detained by the Turkish authorities.

Since the affair of Tahir, the Turkish forces, according to the official accounts published by the Porte, have defeated the Russians on two occasions, on the 21st and 25th. As Sir Arnold Kemball's telegrams are stopped, notwithstanding the orders that have, I am positively assured, been sent from Constantinople to receive them, I am without any trustworthy information about these alleged successes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 97.

Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.

Khorasan, June 17, 1877.

Sir,

BY my telegram of yesterday (subjoined) your Excellency has been informed of the disaster which has overtaken the right wing of the Turkish army, under the command of Mehemed Pasha, near Tahir, in the direction of Molla Sullyman. When I joined Mehemed Pasha's camp at Tahir, on the afternoon of Thursday (15th instant), desirous of witnessing the operations which I had learnt from Muhktar Pasha on the previous day to be under contemplation, and which probably involved an attack upon the Russians now occupying the position recently abandoned by Mehemed Pasha, I found his troops on the alert, with tents struck, preparing to resist the threatened attack of the enemy, who were reported to be advancing on the three roads which converge upon Tahir, from three different points of the Alishjerd Plain.* The threatened attacks proved to be reconnaissances in force, which the Turks drove back without difficulty. On the next day, Friday, after detaching a couple of battalions to watch the two roads on his left, Mehemed Pasha moved forward his force on the caravan way until stopped by the presence of the enemy, as yet apparently in considerable force, established on a crest from eight to ten miles in advance of their own camp at Zaidikan, and distant a long gun-shot range from the ground which the Turks thereon proceeded to occupy. Both positions were of great strength, such as abound in a mountainous country, and consisted of parallel ridges flanked by high mountains. Between the two was a wide inferior ridge, or double ridge, with the intervening spaces very much cut up by ravines and vallies, the principal one of these, formed by the bed of a stream, with deep and rugged banks, leading down the right flank of the Turks. The lie of the ground, without, however, much difference of elevation, inclined in their direction. Here the two armies were engaged all Friday in intrenching themselves, and on the side of the Russians probably in bringing up artillery and troops from their camp in the rear. It was not until the afternoon of that day that they showed two battalions of infantry, required for outpost duties, and placed sixteen field pieces in position. They had previously crowned their crest, and the hills on either flank, with cavalry and mountain guns only.

Seeing the very great preponderance of the enemy's cavalry and artillery, and it might therefore be urged of his infantry, it was now that Mehemed Pasha might, and I think ought, prudently to have declined the contest and retired; at least ought he to have taken the precaution to fortify his front with solid earth-works (as we observed did the Russians), to support the miserable shelter trenches he was content to throw up for the defence of his line; but his mind was still full of the idea that the Russians were inferior in force, and being themselves threatened in the rear by the division of Faik Pasha, which was reported to be on the march from Wan to Bayezid, that they would not await his attack (should he carry out his intention, as announced to Muhktar Pasha),† but would be obliged to retire before him in order to cover the latter place; these

* Of these roads, that on the Turkish right is the high caravan way from Bayezid, at all times practicable for guns. The other two are summer roads, at all seasons impracticable, or nearly so, for the carts of the country. The centre road, leading over the bed of a mountain stream, being the most difficult.

† At Khorasan I found Captains McCalmont and Trotter on their way from Olti to join me, consequent on notice from Muhktar Pasha that an engagement was impending.

false impressions being confirmed by scouts of a doubtful character, and more especially by the opinion and advice of a Circassian deserter, who, after twenty-two years' service, had attained the rank of major in the Russian army, and who, though properly suspected, seemed to enjoy his entire confidence. By retiring too he would at least have allowed time for the arrival of the two battalions from Kupri Keui, which, in our flight from the battle-field, we met near the mouth of the Delibaba Pass, on their way to join him, as well as of the six guns which on this occasion he had left behind him at Tai-Khojeh, and which we found there on our return, though he professed to have ordered them to the front.*

As the sun rose on the next morning (yesterday) the advance of the Russians in order of battle, with ten strong battalions of infantry, supported in front by sixteen field pieces (Krupp, 6-prs.), which were pushed forward to the intervening crest, and on their left flank by seven regiments of cavalry (which marched leisurely over a stiff country in the direction of the valley leading down the right flank of the Turks, to emerge in their rear if the position should be carried), proved how fatally Mehemed Pasha had deceived himself. The five field pieces only and two mountain guns,† which he was enabled to place in position, were very shortly over-matched, and moreover, their ammunition beginning to fail, he was obliged to withdraw them. The Russian battalions, of which seven we judge were brought into action, the other three being held in reserve, marched forward in succession in excellent order, breaking up as they came under the Turkish artillery fire, and taking full advantage of the knolls and inequalities of the ground before them to obtain shelter, none wasting a shot until they reached the gully, some 700 yards in front of the Turkish position. I inclose a map of the battle-field sketched, in concert with myself, by Captain Norman (late of the Bengal Staff Corps). From this gully their skirmishers on the high ground beyond had previously dislodged the Circassian horsemen 600 strong,‡ who had posted themselves in it for no practical purpose that I could observe, the country before them and on the right being quite impracticable for cavalry, but who happily beat a timely retreat with the loss only of three or four men and horses killed or wounded. At 10·45 the left Russian attack had crossed this gully and commenced to ascend the hill, which formed the right of the Turkish position, defended by a battalion of infantry with one mountain gun. By keeping on the reverse side the assailants were scarcely exposed to the distant and ineffectual fire of the Turkish left, while, being undisturbed by a counter attack, they were enabled, on reaching the brow of the hill, where they would come in view of the defenders, to raise at leisure a breast-work of stones to cover their further advance up the intervening slope to the Turkish trenches. Here, it is presumed, the Russians must have suffered severely. Their first rush failed, and it was not till 11·45, when the ammunition of the Turkish infantry along the whole line began to fail,§ that they succeeded by a more determined attempt in effecting their object. From this moment all resistance ceased. The position being turned, the Turks abandoned their trenches, and on the Russian cavalry coming into action, their retreat speedily assumed the form of a rout. Immediately before the crisis, Ferrik Mehemed Pasha, the Turkish General, was killed by a rifle-bullet in the forehead, and the command devolved upon Lion Mustafa Pasha, who was at some distance to the rear observing the movements of the Russian cavalry, and endeavouring to check their advance by an occasional shell from his retired guns. The announcement appears to have taken him by surprise, nor indeed was much time left him to consider the situation. I may mention that he immediately dispatched an aide-de-camp to summon me to his side, and to ask my advice; but, inasmuch as I had taken no part whatever in the previous arrangements, none of which I could have approved from the primary determination to risk an engagement, and that I could not have complied with his invitation without seriously compromising my neutral character, I did not regret that the occasion had passed for giving any reply. Russians and Turks were already mingled together at the trenches. The Cossacks were crossing the valley on the right rear. The Turkish battalions were losing their formation, and time hardly admitted of my escaping capture by immediate flight. As it was I got through the

* Muhktar Pasha informed Captain Trotter, that these guns had been unable to join Mehemed Pasha owing to the badness of the road, but no rain had fallen for a long time, and we found the road good and practicable.

† One field-piece had been sent with the battalion which was detached to watch the roads on the left. Two mountain guns in reserve completed the Turkish artillery force. The Russians also advanced by the above roads after the main position of the Turks had been captured.

‡ These Circassians displayed much cool bravery when exposed to the Russian shells in their passage to the Turkish line, and came returned with fresh horses to carry off their disabled comrades.

§ The battalions near which I took up my station to observe the engagement went into action with fifteen rounds per man.

Delibaba Pass and into Tai Khojeh barely half an hour a-head of the Cossacks following in pursuit, as was certified by two Turkish officers who galloped into the village where my party stopped to bait our horses, calling upon the officer commanding the troops posted there to prepare to stop their advance.

I write in great haste to save the post, and even were I not pressed for time I should have few comments to make on the points of the battle I have endeavoured to describe; they may be summed up in the ludicrous inequality of the opposing forces in every respect save one, that of individual pluck and bravery, in which, without any disparagement to the Russians, I could assign to them no superiority. Efficiently trained, organized, and equipped, and properly commanded, the Turkish soldier would have few superiors. Unpaid, unprovided as he is, his sense of military discipline and subordination remains unimpaired; but without training and without leaders possessing any—the most elementary knowledge of their profession, to pit them in the open field against the well-ordered and admirably-led troops of Russia, is to send them to certain defeat and slaughter, whatever the numerical odds in their favour. I doubt if, with the disadvantages under which they labour, they could, behind fortifications, do more than oppose a passive resistance to the superior artillery and arms of precision of the present day. On the present occasion they exhibited their wonted cool courage under the heaviest fire, but they were permitted—even encouraged to expend their ammunition in the most reckless manner, the men firing their rifles without aim at impossible distances, and even in the air; while their leaders had omitted every strategical precaution obviously suggested by the necessities of the situation; nor is this incapacity of the Turkish officers generally due to ignorance only, but to a conceit that rejects and defies instruction. I am unable as yet to state precisely the losses sustained by the Turks yesterday; I can only say that their defeat resulted in a "débandade," and in as much as from my present position I can observe a strong Russian "avant-garde" occupying the ridge which separates the valley of Delibaba from that of Tai Khojeh, in rear of the pass, that not a gun and probably not a battalion preserving its formation will escape capture. It is true that reinforcements consisting of 2 battalions from Kupri Keui, and 3 battalions of infantry, 800 irregular horse, and 1 battery of horse artillery, under Reis Ahmed Pasha, have been immediately ordered to proceed to Delibaba; they have, however, been significantly instructed to march viâ Khorasan, and will probably be required to defend that place, or to co-operate with Muhktar Pasha, who, being now outflanked, must sooner or later retreat, if he be not induced to defer his retrograde movement until the safety of his own army is compromised. General Derkolkhasoff now holds the command of the road from Delibaba to Kupri Keui, where one battalion only without guns is posted, and he may be expected at any moment to occupy Kupri Keui.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. B. KEMBALL, *Major-General.*

No. 98.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 694.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June 29, 1877.*

I REGRET to say that accounts reach me from all sides of the excesses and outrages committed by the Circassians and Tartars in the Dobrudja and neighbouring districts, in consequence of the retreat of the Turkish regular troops before the advancing Russians. The Christians and their villages are left the prey of these marauders, who are, it is stated, committing every kind of atrocity. The Porte is aware of the state of affairs, but, although orders are being sent to the authorities to take immediate steps to protect the lives and property of the Christian populations, without police or any other force at their disposal, they are powerless to act. The Dobrudja, which, during the last few years, had been converted into a rich and flourishing province, will now be laid waste and destroyed, and its Christian population exterminated or reduced to the utmost misery.

I greatly fear that such will be the case in many parts of Bulgaria. The responsibility must rest upon those who have been the cause of this unrighteous and horrible war.

I have directed Mr. Vice-Consul Sankey to keep me fully informed as to the state of affairs in the Dobrudja, and I will lose no opportunity of pressing upon the Porte the urgent necessity of doing all in its power to protect the Christians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 99.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 695.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June 29, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Reade, dated 26th instant, giving an account of the bombardment by the Russians of the defenceless part of Rustchuk, inhabited by Christians, Jews, and Consuls.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 99.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Rustchuk, June 26, 1877.*

I HAVE to-day but a melancholy report to forward to you; and as our situation, from what appears to be the determination on the opposite side to spare none of us, is a most precarious one at this moment, I must beg your indulgence to any errors or omissions I may make.

On Sunday the 24th, about 3 o'clock P.M., the batteries on the opposite side—ten heavy ones—opened fire hotly on the town of Rustchuk.

At first the fire was chiefly directed on the Turkish quarter. When this had been pretty well riddled, it was turned on the Jewish quarter, as well as the Armenian; and after this had gone on for some time, the Bulgarian quarter received its share, and we were then in hopes that we should see soon a cessation of the fire altogether. But, no; about 6 o'clock shells commenced falling in such numbers all about this and the French Consulate, that we saw at once that we were to have our share also. A shell burst in the French garden, within a few yards of my colleague's office, the pieces flying about in such a way that we only escaped by throwing ourselves flat on the ground.

M. Aubaret then proposed that we should replace the flags we were flying, which were about 3 yards by 2 yards, by others double their size, although I was sure that the smaller ones could not but be seen, as ours were the first houses opposite the batteries, 1,000 to 1,500 mètres distant. I consented, but to no purpose, for the fire then appeared to be redoubled, and in about five or six minutes this Consulate received about four shells of 15 centimètres calibre, which destroyed it internally from top to bottom. About ten minutes before this I was sitting at my desk thinking of penning a short telegram to you, but I fortunately put it off and left; for had I not gone I should have been dashed to atoms, as the shell that burst in the office smashed my writing-table and chair all to pieces, most of the papers were cut to bits, and four pieces of shell went into the wall just where I had been sitting; my Dragoman's desk is all in chips, and the cupboard containing the archives was struck in such a way that you may imagine the state of the papers; many are lost, others torn to pieces, and others unintelligible.

Another shell fell in my bedroom, demolishing a large part of the corner of the house, blowing out one of the windows, and destroying almost the whole of the furniture.

A third shell burst in the pantry, and through two walls, destroying my glass, crockery, &c.

The fourth shell went obliquely through the roof of my drawing-room, with such force, as to cause considerable damage to the furniture.

Just as this occurred several of my colleagues and others advised me not to enter my house, as the fire was, beyond all doubt, directed on it; even the cavasses in charge of the Ottoman Bank, the next house, say the same.

I had another narrow escape; about five minutes before a stone pillar at the corner of the French garden was struck. I was leaning on it, and trying to count the opposite batteries as well as I could, not dreaming that we should be fired upon. The fire then continued to pour on the quarter all around us until about 8 o'clock, when it ceased.

The casualties altogether between dead and wounded are about seventy. The Bulgarians suffered as much as the others. Several shells fell into the hospitals flying the white flag, and two mosques were seriously damaged.

As regards the object of this fire upon Rustchuk, the Russians only know. There was no bridge being constructed, or any other attempt to cross being made, nor was there any attack by land requiring the support of a fire from the opposite side. The Turks had given no provocation whatever, and as there were two of the killed, we can only come to the conclusion that the object of the Russians was to deliberately massacre as many as possible of the whole population indiscriminately. On Monday morning the Consuls received the inclosed Circular from the Governor.

Yesterday evening, about 7 P.M., the fire was again opened from the other side, and continued till dark. It was this time more directed against the batteries, and this proves that the attack on the Consulates on the previous day was intentional.

The casualties yesterday were about one-half of those of the day before.

On Sunday evening, after the firing had ceased, I forwarded a telegram to the Earl of Derby similar to that to your Excellency.

Up to this morning (5·10 A.M.) I have received no reply, and, as after what has happened, we do not know what to expect from one moment to the other, I am in a state of considerable perplexity. This Consulate being destroyed, the Russians can do no more than batter down the walls; but, as I am here, I have the honour to repeat in the interest of the very Christians whom the Russian profess to be coming to relieve it would be of service to know if I am to be one of the objects of their fire, otherwise it will be impossible for me to be of the slightest service to them or anybody else here. Notwithstanding the Russians, however, I shall remain at my post as ordered.

The whole of the Civil Government has to-day moved out to an adjacent hill, in order to be in communication with the Governor-General. I am making arrangements to be able to see him when necessary, at least three-fourths of the population have also left the town.

You may hear some complaint from the other side of the Turks having fired on Giurgevo. As to this, having been an eye-witness, I, as well as my colleagues, saw the hospitals and several mosques struck one after the other by Russian shells before the Turks decided to fire on Giurgevo, certainly one hour and a-quarter after the commencement of the cannonade on this town. Their forbearance appeared most extraordinary to us, and if Giurgevo has suffered the fault is entirely with the Russians.

The Bulgarians here, from their experiences of Saturday night, ought to be able to form a good idea as to their professed friends. This evening Rustchuk was again bombarded from 6 to 8·30. The Turks replied, but the casualties are not yet known. A Government house was set on fire and spread as far as the Austrian Consulate in such a way as greatly to endanger it. To-day there was no Consulate struck.

When the Government building was set on fire no one went near it at first, it was consequently allowed to burn and set fire to the next house, and just before it had reached the Austrian Consulate soldiers were sent and managed to subdue the fire.

The town is almost empty. The soldiers are occupied with the batteries, consequently if a fire occurs there is hardly any one to give his attention to it. Bashi-Bazouks are patrolling the streets, but do nothing else whatever. Our position is such that to-morrow the Consuls will meet to consider what is best to be done.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

No. 100.

Acting Consul Joly to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 6.*)

(No. 7. Political.)
My Lord, *Sungrino, June 20, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 6, Political, dated the 22nd instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith inclosed copy of a further despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Marato at Aivali, relative to the acts committed by the Circassians in that district. I also furnished Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople with a copy of Mr. Marato's despatch on the 23rd instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) STEPHEN JOLY.

Inclosure in No. 100.

Vice-Consul Marato to Acting Consul Joly.

Sir, *Aivali, June 22, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt in due time of your telegraphic despatches of the 17th and 19th instant. In conformity to your orders, I made every possible investigation in this town concerning the acts committed by the Circassians, and all that I positively know is that the agricultural Christian labourers have been attacked on the road whilst going to their farms from this town; and, on their return here, made their complaints to the local authorities of what they had suffered from the Circassians, who fired at them and stole their horses. Two of the labourers returned here wounded, and others severely beaten.

This week we have not heard of any fresh cruelties having been committed by the said Circassians in this district, since the guards have been ordered to visit all the places frequented by the Christian labourers, as stated in my letter of the 15th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. P. MARATO.

No. 101.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 6.*)

(No. 347.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, July 1, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship herewith (published in the "Agence Russe" of to-day) a Proclamation of the Emperor of Russia to the Bulgarians on crossing the Danube.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 101.

Extract from the "Agence Russe" of July 1, 1877.

St. Pétersbourg, Samedi soir, le $\frac{15}{30}$ Juin, 1877.

DEPUIS notre dernier numéro nous avons communiqué à nos abonnés les télégrammes suivants:—

"*Proclamation de Sa Majesté l'Empereur de Russie aux Bulgares.*

"Mes troupes ayant franchi le Danube, entrent aujourd'hui sur votre territoire où plusieurs fois déjà elles ont combattu pour l'amélioration du sort des habitants Chrétiens de la Péninsule des Balkans. Fidèles aux anciennes traditions historiques,

puisant toujours des forces nouvelles dans l'union intime et séculaire les attachant au peuple Orthodoxe, mes aïeux avaient réussi par leur influence et leurs armes à assurer successivement le sort des Serbes et des Roumains en les appelant à une existence politique nouvelle. Le temps et les circonstances n'ont pas altéré les sympathies de la Russie pour ses coreligionnaires d'Orient. Elle porte toujours le même amour, la même sollicitude à tous les membres de la grande famille Chrétienne de la Péninsule des Balkans. J'ai confié à mon armée, commandée par mon frère le Grand Duc Nicholas, la mission d'assurer les droits sacrés de votre nationalité, qui constitue la condition immuable du développement pacifique et régulier de toute existence civile. Ces droits vous ne les avez pas acquis par la force de la résistance armée, mais au prix des souffrances séculaires, au prix du sang des martyrs dont vous et vos ancêtres trempez depuis des siècles le sol de votre patrie.

"Habitants du pays Bulgare! le but de la Russie est d'édifier et non pas de détruire. Elle est appelée par les décrets de la Providence à pacifier, concilier toutes les races, tous les cultes dans la patrie des Bulgares où vivent des habitants d'origine et de croyances diverses. Désormais les armes Russes protégeront chaque Chrétien contre toute violence, aucune atteinte ne sera portée impunément à sa personne ou à ses biens par qui que ce soit; tout crime sera suivi du châtiment; la vie, la liberté, l'honneur, la propriété de chaque Chrétien seront également garantis à quelque rite qu'il appartienne. Ce n'est pas la vengeance qui guidera nos actes, mais bien le sentiment de la stricte équité qui y présidera seul, ainsi que la ferme volonté de faire progressivement succéder l'ordre et le droit là où règne le désordre et l'arbitraire.

"Et vous, Musulmans Bulgares, je vous adresse un avertissement salutaire. Il m'est pénible d'évoquer les souvenirs des crimes et des violences dont plusieurs d'entre vous ont été coupables envers les Chrétiens sans défense. Ces horreurs ne sauraient être oubliées, mais l'autorité Russe ne voudra pas rendre tous responsables des crimes de quelques-uns. Une justice régulière et impartiale atteindra seuls les criminels restés impunis, quoique leurs noms fussent parfaitement connus de votre Gouvernement. Reconnaissez aujourd'hui la justice de Dieu qui vous atteint, inclinez-vous devant sa volonté, soumettez-vous aux exigences légitimes des autorités qui seront instituées partout où paraîtrait mes troupes, devenez citoyens paisibles d'une société prête à vous accorder les bienfaits d'une organisation régulière. Votre religion restera intacte, votre existence, vos biens, la vie et l'honneur de vos familles seront sacrés pour nous.

"Chrétiens Bulgares! vous traversez des jours mémorables. L'heure de la délivrance de l'arbitraire des Musulmans est enfin sonnée. Donnez à l'univers l'exemple de l'amour Chrétien, oubliez les anciennes dissensions intestines en respectant scrupuleusement les droits légitimes de chaque nationalité, unissez-vous, frères en religion, dans un sentiment de concorde et d'amour fraternel qui offrent seuls des bases pour un édifice solide et durable, serrez-vous étroitement à l'ombre du drapeau Russe dont les victoires ont tant de fois retenti sur le Danube et dans les Balkans. A mesure que les troupes Russes avanceront dans l'intérieur du pays, le pouvoir Turc sera remplacé par une organisation régulière, les habitants indigènes seront aussitôt appelés à y participer activement sous la haute direction des autorités spéciales et nouvelles. Les légions Bulgares serviront de noyau, de force armée locale destinée à maintenir l'ordre et la sécurité. L'empressement que vous aurez mis à servir honnêtement votre patrie, l'impartialité que vous aurez apportée dans l'accomplissement de ce grand devoir, prouveront au monde que vous êtes dignes du sort que vous a préparé la Russie depuis tant d'années au prix de si grands sacrifices. Obéissez aux autorités Russes. Suivez fidèlement leurs indications. Là est votre force et votre salut.

"Avec humilité je demande au Seigneur de nous accorder la victoire sur l'ennemi des Chrétiens et de faire descendre sa bénédiction sur notre juste cause.

(Signé) "ALEXANDRE."

No. 102.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 577.) *Paris, July 5, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of an extract from the telegraph paper of the Havas Agency, which contradicts, on authority, a telegram from Constantinople stating that the French fleet would join the British fleet in Besika Bay.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure in No. 102.

Havas Telegram.

Londres, le 5 Juillet, 1877.

LE "Morning Advertiser" publie la dépêche suivante:—

"*Constantinople, le 4 Juilet.*

"On dit ici que la flotte Française va venir joindre la flotte Anglaise dans la Baie de Besika."

Nous sommes autorisés à déclarer que cette nouvelle est dénuée de toute espèce de fondement. Note de "l'Agence Havas."

No. 103.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, July 5, 1877.*

IT seems that crossing of the Roumanian force over Danube has not been accomplished yet: it is confidently hoped it will not be over Servian territory, but lower.

(Sent to Constantinople.)

No. 104.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tiflis, July 5, 1877.*

DEFEAT of Muscovites near Batoum, reported in a former telegram, confirmed; they have been driven back to Ozurget; 8,000 troops have been sent from the army of Rion to Kars. Will not withdrawal of this force compel abandonment on this side of operations against Batoum?

No. 105.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 235.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, July 6, 1877, 10·40 A.M.*

VICE-CONSUL at Trebizond telegraphs that a private letter to him, dated Soukoum Kaleh, 26th ultimo, not from newspaper correspondent, states that Russian atrocities are reported at Adler, north of Soukoum.

1,500 families are reported to have died of starvation, being forced to fly into the forests to escape the Cossacks, who burnt and pillaged all before them.

No. 106.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 6, 1877, 3·45 P.M.*

WHAT is your opinion of Mr. Green's proposal to go to Cettigné, made in his telegram of 4th instant?

No. 107.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.

Foreign Office, July 6, 1877, 4 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
MR. LAYARD is being consulted with reference to the proposal in your telegram of the 4th instant.

No. 108.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

Vienna, July 6, 1877, 5 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
AS the Emperor of Austria is staying in the neighbourhood of Vienna, I am assured that he will not meet Emperor of Germany on his Majesty's way to Gastein, and that a meeting between their Majesties will not take place until Emperor William is on his way home.

No. 109.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

Therapia, July 6, 1877, 7·45 P.M.

(No. 236.)
(Telegraphic.)
CONSUL READE telegraphs from Varna:—
"Just returned from Kustendje. Alleged outrages untrue. Situation under actual circumstances favourable. Report by post."

No. 110.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 659. Confidential.)
Therapia, June 25, 1877.

My Lord,
IN my despatch No. 595 of the 10th instant, I informed your Lordship that I had requested Yovantcho Effendi, a Bulgarian gentleman well acquainted with the wishes and hopes of his countrymen, to make me a Memorandum of what he had stated to me verbally on the subject. He has done so, but has not entered into all the details that I had asked for. However, I inclose a copy of the document with which he has furnished me, as it is of interest as giving a general idea of the views and opinions of some of the most intelligent, best educated, and most independent Bulgarians, as regards their relations with the Porte and the attempt of Russia to bring Bulgaria under her influence and power. The strong feeling entertained by the Bulgarians against the Greeks is very evident in this paper.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 110.

Memorandum by Yovantcho Effendi on Relations of Bulgaria with the Porte, &c.

UNE des populations en Turquie les plus importantes par leurs aptitudes pour les travaux paisibles et féconds est, sans contredit, la population Bulgare. Mais les circonstances ne lui ont pas permis jusqu'ici de tirer de ses qualités des avantages réelles pour sa prospérité. Des voisins ambitieux, les Grecs, qui sous le protection effienco avaient pu arriver de bonne heure à un degré de développement moral, matériel, et intellectuel, s'en servirent au moyen de la suprématie spirituelle qu'ils exerçaient sans contrôle pendant longtemps sur les Bulgares comme d'une arme pour réduire cette population à l'état d'abrutissement et pour lui faire oublier son origine, son passé, sa langue, au profit de leur propre nationalité. Du reste les commotions

qui se produisaient presque périodiquement sur les frontières de l'Empire ayant obligé celui-ci de se maintenir constamment en état de guerre, et ses sujets, surtout les Bulgares, ayant du supporter le poids de cet état, leur essor en était devenu, sinon impossible, du moins très difficile.

La promulgation du Tinsimat, qui est un des effets du souffle réformateur du XIX^e^ siècle et qui avait pour but d'appeler tous les peuples de l'Empire à une vie nouvelle, a été une occasion pour les Bulgares de songer à la sauvegarde de leur existence nationale, et cela en vue de s'assurer, sous les auspices des Sultans, par un développement conforme à leur esprit essentiellement pacifique, toute la somme de bien-être auquel ils croient parvenir aspirer.

Un des progrès incontestables réalisés par les Bulgares dans la domaine de leur vie morale fut de sentir la nécessité pour eux de se rapprocher du Gouvernement Impérial dont un élément ennemi les tenait à distance pour leur plus grand préjudice. D'ailleurs ce rapprochement était fortement exigé par les intérêts mêmes de ce Gouvernement, qui s'apercevait déjà des inconvénients qui devaient résulter pour lui d'une absorption de la majeure partie de ses sujets en Europe par une minorité remuante qui avait donné plus d'une fois des preuves d'inconstance et de légèreté.

En faisant octroyer aux Bulgares une administration ecclésiastique rattachée simplement par un lien d'ordre au Patriarchat Œcuménique, feu Ali Pacha avait eu pour objet de mettre de cette manière la nationalité Bulgare à l'abri de tout danger et d'offrir à sa propre nation un ami et un allié intérieur des plus solides. Mais, à la mort de cet éminent homme d'Etat tout changea. Non seulement les Bulgares se virent de nouveau exposés, mais leur qualité de Chrétiens Orthodoxes fut un moment menacée.

Certains Bulgares exaltés qui ont puisé leurs convictions politiques hors du pays et dont le seul mérite a toujours consisté à servir, sous le masque d'un dévouement outré à l'Empire Ottoman, des intérêts étrangers, crurent le moment venu pour eux d'exécuter cette fois encore leurs funestes desseins en donnant à la diplomatie Russe à Constantinople un prétexte de se poser en protectrice de leur communauté, les prétendus patriotes jetèrent le haut cri qu'un accord entre l'Exarchat Bulgare et le Patriarchat Grec était de nature à compromettre l'avenir de la dite communauté en otant à une grande partie de ses membres la faculté de s'unir à leurs frères dans le giron de leur Eglise nationale, et rien ne fut négligé pour que cet accord ne se réalisat pas.

Justement irrité du peu d'empressement des chefs religieux Bulgares d'établir leurs relations avec le siége Œcuménique sur le pied de légalité voulu, le Patriarche n'hésita point à fulminer contre eux et leurs ouailles la proclamation du schisme que l'on connait. Puisque les Ministres Ottomans d'alors semblaient disposés à faire produire à cet acte ecclésiastique, d'ailleurs arbitraire, les effets que les Bulgares lui contestent, les ennemis du pays eurent le temps de jouer leur rôle dans cette occurrence. Ainsi donc le schisme, d'abord et ensuite le besoin où ils étaient d'être protégés contre l'application de cette peine morale qu'ils ne pensaient nullement à avoir encourue, apprirent aux Bulgares de considérer plus particulièrement la Russie comme un ami et un sauveur.

La méfiance était déjà née chez les Bulgares vis-à-vis du Gouvernement Impérial et elle allait croissante par cette considération que le règlement pour le fonctionnement de leur institution ecclésiastique, soumis immédiatement après sa création à qui de droit pour être sanctionné, tardait de recevoir cette sanction, de sorte que les Bulgares se croyaient sans défense contre la mée de propagandes religieuses qui continuent encore aujourd'hui d'offenser impunément leurs sentiments les plus chers.

C'est à la faveur de cet état de choses peu normal que les comités révolutionnaires, entretenus par l'Omladina Serbe à Bucarest, s'impressèrent, par l'intermédiaire de leurs agents, d'exploiter les faiblesses de la population Bulgare en essayant de la pusser à la révolte. Trompés deux ou trois fois dans leurs tentatives criminelles ils réussirent enfin l'année dernière dans le district de Philippopolis, non pas à soulever les Bulgares, qui n'ont ni les armes nécessaires pour une pareille entreprise ni l'habitude de s'en servir, mais à provoquer de la part des Musulmans les atrocités en leur fournissant un motif d'excitation, atrocités que le Gouvernement Impérial lui-même avait peine à croire.

Le désir des Bulgares de vivre sous l'égide du sceptre des Sultans, selon le génie de leur race, est sincère, car les abus de toute sorte dont ils souffrirent sous l'ancien régime et surtout les violences exercées sur eux par les Circassiens au détriment de leur vie, de leur honneur, et de leur fortune, n'ont pu les détacher du trône Ottoman.

En effet, tandis que dans telle localité, grâce aux efforts intelligents d'un digne Gouverneur, les habitants contents de leur sort s'occupaient en toute sécurité de leurs travaux, dans telle autre les souffrances arrivaient parfois à leur comble. Au reste, de par le système de changer souvent les Gouverneurs, les misères succédaient aux jouissances douces et *vice versâ* dans un même endroit selon qu'une bonne ou une mauvaise administration s'y exerçait.

Les Bulgares ont reçu volontiers l'appui moral de la Russie dans la lutte soutenue par eux pour se soustraire à l'oppression du clergé Grec; mais à cause de l'unité de religion avec les Russes, et plus particulièrement à cause de l'affinité qui existe entre leur idiome et celui des Russes, ils abhorrent la domination de la Russie pour cette raison très simple que cette Puissance ne manquerait pas de chercher à les dénationaliser, comme elle s'efforce de dénationaliser les peuples subjugués déjà par elle et moins susceptibles de fièvre.

Donc quelques bienfaits que les Russes promettent aux Bulgares ceux-ci préféreront rester sous l'autorité des Ottomans tant que leurs intérêts seront garantis sous tous les rapports contre des empiètements quelconques. Je crois être dans le vrai en affirmant qu'une invasion Russe en Bulgarie ne saurait exercer sur ses habitants une influence sensible au point de les déterminer à faire cause commune avec l'envahisseur, à moins qu'une force majeure n'agisse sur eux en sens contraire. Cette croyance est aussi basée sur le passé, où il n'y a point d'exemple d'une semblable conduite de la part des Bulgares.

La crainte que des nouvelles atrocités seront accomplies par les Musulmans pourrait être dissipée si les mesures prises dernièrement par le Gouvernement Impérial parvenaient à modérer la fougue des Bashi-Bazouks et des Circassiens et les contenir.

No. 111.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 660. Confidential.)

Therapia, June 25, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha stated to me last week that they had received information, upon which they had every reliance, that a secret understanding had been come to between Russia and Austria, by which the former would be allowed to send an army across the Danube at Gladova into the Servian territory. They declared that preparations were already being made with this view by the Servian Government; that military roads were being constructed for the purpose of affording facilities for the march of the Russian troops through Servia, and that measures were being taken to place a Servian army in the field to serve with the Russian against Turkey. They expressed great alarm at these threatening proceedings, and begged me to communicate the information which had reached them to your Lordship and to Mr. White. They intended, they added, to ask for explanations of the Austrian and Servian Governments.

Safvet Pasha accordingly spoke to Count Zichy and M. Christich, the Servian Agent, on the subject. They both expressed their doubts as to the trustworthiness of the information which had been given to the Porte, and their conviction that the assurances of the Emperor of Russia that his army would not cross the Danube into Servia, and that he would not encourage the Servians to take part in the war against Turkey might be fully relied on. However, they telegraphed the Porte's alarms to their respective Governments.

The Turkish Ambassador at Vienna has been informed by Count Andrassy, Safvet Pasha told me, that although there was a party in Servia desirous of plunging the Principality once more into war, and of taking advantage of the presence of the Russians in Roumania to do so by giving them a passage across the Danube, yet the Servian Government had no intention to engage in hostilities against Turkey or to permit the Russians to cross that river at Gladova. The Porte should, therefore, remain "tranquil and indifferent" to the movements and intrigues of the opposition party.

M. Christich, in pursuance of instructions from his Government, called upon Safvet Pasha to give his Excellency similar assurances. Safvet Pasha, however, seemed still to be convinced that the reports which had been received by the Turkish Government as to an understanding between Russia, Austria, and Servia, which would

enable Russian troops to cross at Gladova, sooner or later, were well founded. His Excellency hinted to M. Christich that, in the event of preparations being made to do so, the Porte would be under the necessity of taking immediate measures to enter Servian territory for the purpose of disputing their passage. This hint alarmed M. Christich, who at once protested against the entry of Turkish troops into Servia under any circumstances whatever, as a breach of Treaty and neutrality, and as a declaration of war against Servia. He subsequently called upon me, and asked me whether he had not been justified in protesting, and what the Powers would do if Turkey carried out her menace of violating Servian territory.

I told M. Christich that I thought his Government should address a similar protest to Russia, who would be equally guilty of a violation of Treaties and of Servian territory if she crossed into Servia. If she were about to do so, it was scarcely to be expected, I said, that Turkey would not take steps to oppose a proceeding which, if successful, would expose her to the gravest danger. If the Servian Government connived at the passage of the Russian armies across the Danube at Gladova into Servian territory, it must be prepared to meet the consequences. It should therefore, I thought, do its utmost to prevent anything of the kind taking place.

M. Christich said that Servia could not oppose a powerful Empire like Russia, and no protest would be of any avail; but, if Turkish troops crossed the frontier, it might lead to a general rising in the Principality, and to the immediate entry into it of an Austrian army. Such a state of affairs might end in the absolute destruction of Servia.

I telegraphed what the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha had said to me to your Lordship, and I have since received Sir Andrew Buchanan's telegrams of the 22nd and 23rd, and Mr. White's of the 23rd instant, stating that there is no reason to believe that the Russians intend to cross the Danube into Servia, or that preparations are being made in the Principality to enable them to do so, and for war with Turkey.

I have communicated these statements to Safvet Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD

No. 112.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 661.)

Therapia, June 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of the note addressed to the Porte by the Austrian Ambassador with respect to the navigation of the Danube and the views of the Austrian Government with regard to that river.

I am at a loss to understand why my Austrian colleague should hitherto have made such a secret of it, as its substance was communicated to your Lordship by Count Beust in pursuance of instructions from Count Andrassy. In fact, Count Zichy's note differs but little from the despatch of the Austro-Hungarian Premier to the Austrian Ambassador in London, copy of which was inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 177 of the 7th instant. Its terms are, perhaps, in some instances a little more peremptory and threatening than those of Count Andrassy's despatch, and I was informed, upon what I considered trustworthy authority, that Count Zichy had received further instructions which led him to use the somewhat stronger language. But I may have been misled. His Excellency has carefully avoided alluding to his note to me, although I have more than once afforded him an opening to do so. Safvet Pasha, who, as I have already stated to your Lordship, looked upon the note as a very menacing and even hostile communication, did not seem much disposed at first to give me a copy of it. He may have been warned not to do so.

I am told that the Porte will probably give way to the demands of the Austro-Hungarian Government rather than have additional trouble at the present moment.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—Since writing this despatch I have been shown the draft of the Porte's intended reply to Count Zichy's note, and have telegraphed the substance of it to your Lordship.

A. H. L.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Inclosure in No. 112.

Count Zichy to Safvet Pasha.

Constantinople, le 7 Juin, 1877.

DANS ses notes de 7 et 9 du mois passé M. le Baron Herbert avait donné acte à votre Excellence de la communication qu'elle avait bien voulu lui faire de plusieurs mesures que la Sublime Porte, à la suite des hostilités engagées avec l'Empire de Russie, avait cru devoir prendre à l'égard de la navigation des neutres dans les eaux maritimes Ottomanes et sur le Danube. Il avait formulé en même temps des réserves dans l'intérêt de nos droits de neutres et s'était ménagé la liberté de faire connaître subséquemment au Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman l'accueil que cette communication aurait rencontré auprès du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Impériale et Royale Apostolique.

Depuis, l'importante question de la sauvegarde des droits et intérêts de la navigation rentre contre toute atteinte par des mesures de guerre de la part des belligérants qui s'écarteraient des règles du droit international Européen, a fourni l'objet d'amples et de consciencieuses délibérations au sein du Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois. Les conclusions auxquelles elles ont abouti ont été résumées par M. le Comte Andrassy dans une dépêche qu'il vient de m'adresser et qui me donne lieu d'exposer à votre Excellence, ainsi que j'aurai l'honneur de le faire par ce qui suit, le point de vue adopté et à maintenir par l'Autriche-Hongrie dans la question dont il s'agit.

Avant d'entrer dans ce développement il convient toutefois de noter qu'à la date de cette dépêche le Cabinet Impérial et Royal n'avait pas encore connaissance de la note de votre Excellence du 31 Mai, qui nous donne l'assurance que les mesures restrictives actuellement en vigueur à l'égard de la navigation sur le Danube n'ont et ne pourront avoir qu'un caractère essentiellement provisoire et passager, l'emploi de ces mesures laissant intacts les principes et les règles applicables à la navigation sur ce fleuve, qui, par conséquent, reprendront tout leur empire dès que les nécessités de la guerre n'y mettront plus d'obstacles.

Je ne puis douter que cette déclaration en ce qu'elle contient de rassurant ne soit accueillie avec satisfaction par le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal. Mais, d'un autre côté, je ne cacherai pas non plus à votre Excellence que l'engagement que la Sublime Porte prend par là envers nous est encore loin de nous offrir toutes les garanties et réparations que nous considérons non moins de notre devoir que de notre droit de réclamer. Si la Sublime Porte, selon les termes de la dernière note de votre Excellence, s'attribue pour le passé le droit de se rendre à elle-même le témoignage de n'avoir pris aucune mesure restrictive sur le Danube qui ne fût justifiée et commandée par l'intérêt supérieur de la défense du territoire national, cette opinion qui, malheureusement, nous ne saurions partager, n'est évidemment pas propre à nous inspirer une très grande confiance à l'endroit de ce que les mesures du Gouvernement Ottoman peuvent réserver à la navigation Danubienne dans l'avenir.

Quoi qu'il en soit, et en faisant la part des dispositions favorables énoncées à cette occasion par votre Excellence au nom de la Turquie, les instructions qui me parviennent du Gouvernement Impérial et Royal ne m'en imposent pas moins le devoir de me rendre, en face du Gouvernement auprès duquel j'ai l'honneur d'être accrédité, l'organe de remontrances et de protestations énergiques.

M. le Comte Andrassy commence par rappeler que les principes établis en faveur de la libre navigation sur le Danube par le droit public Européen et sentiments nationaux, notamment par les Traités de 1856 et de 1871, touchent à des intérêts vitaux de la Monarchie Austro-Hongroie et déclare que quiconque attaque ces principes nous trouvera résolus à en prendre franchement la défense.

Le Cabinet Austro-Hongrois a nettement formulé ces principes dans sa dépêche du 6 du mois précédent, dont j'ai été dans le cas de porter le contenu à la connaissance de votre Excellence par ma note du 19 du même mois et à exprimer l'attente de les voir respectés dans toute leur autorité des parties belligérantes.

La Russie, on ne l'ignore pas, a donné pleine satisfaction à notre demande, en nous offrant les assurances les plus positives à l'endroit de la liberté de la navigation Danubienne dans les conditions provoquées par l'état de guerre actuel. Quant à la Turquie, au moment de l'expédition de la dépêche mentionnée le Cabinet de Vienne, je l'ai dit, en était encore à en attendre des communications à ce sujet. Jusque là le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois n'avait pu que constater avec regret dans les mesures décrétées par la Sublime Porte en matière de navigation des neutres et notifiées aux Puissances par la voie diplomatique un désaccord avec les dispositions des Traités

internationaux en vigueur et une lésion de nos droits qu'il nous serait impossible de tolérer.

Obligés de nous élever contre ces abus il nous incombe de spécifier nos griefs. Nous ne saurions d'abord admettre le système de déclarer et de considérer le Danube simplement comme une ligne de défense de l'Empire Ottoman. Le Danube est avant tout une grande voie de commerce, ouverte aux marines marchandes de tout pavillon. Le mouvement commercial sur cette voie d'eau ne peut être entravé par qui que ce soit et pour aucun motif. Nous ne contestons point les droits de souveraineté territoriale que la Sublime Porte en qualité de Puissance riveraine, dans les limites, toutefois, que comportent les Traités, est fondée à revendiquer. Mais ces derniers garantissent la libre navigation sur le Danube, et la prétention seule de la Turquie de ne considérer le fleuve que comme une ligne de défense stratégique et d'en disposer exclusivement à son gré se trouvait en contradiction avec cette liberté de navigation placée sous la sauvegarde du droit public de l'Europe ou du moins pourrait faire naître des interprétations tout-à-fait inadmissibles des droits qui découlent de la souveraineté territoriale. Cette prétention s'accorde encore moins avec les transactions internationales lorsqu'on prend en considération les ouvrages et établissements de la Commission Européenne du Danube, déclarés neutres expressément par l'Article VII du Traité du 13 Mars, 1871, en accord avec les dispositions antérieures de l'Acte public du 2 Novembre, 1865, de manière qu'en cas de guerre, et la stipulation de neutralité ne vise que ce cas, ils doivent être respectés intégralement par les belligérants et ne peuvent en aucune façon être compris dans un système de défense militaire.

Nous réclamons, par conséquent, catégoriquement contre cette manière de voir de la Sublime Porte à l'égard du Danube, ainsi que contre toutes les conséquences qui dans un ordre d'idées peu conforme aux Traités internationaux pourraient en dériver au détriment des principes de liberté de commerce et de navigation sur le Danube. J'obéis aux ordres de mon Gouvernement en donnant à cette protestation que je suis chargé à notifier à votre Excellence l'expression la plus formelle.

En sauvegardant intact dans ces termes le point de droit nous ne méconnaissons pas, d'autre part, la nature de la situation créée par la guerre entre la Russie et la Turquie, et nous sommes disposés à tenir justement compte des conditions inhérentes à cet état de choses. Le domaine du Bas Danube est devenu pour le moment le théâtre d'événements militaires, et nous ne nous dissimulons pas l'obligation que nous avons, en qualité de neutres, de ne pas entraver les opérations régulières des belligérants. En tant que la liberté de commerce et de communication des neutres peut en général être troublée et restreinte par des opérations de guerre, nous n'entendions et nous n'entendons pas élever des plaintes de ce chef par rapport aux incidents de la guerre qui a éclaté sur le Bas Danube; mais nous sommes en droit d'exiger, comme nous l'avons fait, que la libre navigation dans les eaux fluviales en question ne soit plus arrêtée par aucune mesure restrictive à partir du moment où les opérations militaires, en s'éloignant des bords mêmes du fleuve, cessent de réclamer impérieusement des mesures exceptionnelles de cet ordre. Nous sommes également obligés de prétendre que ces restrictions ne soient pas étendues en général au delà de leur rayon de portée effectif, que leur durée ne soit pas prolongée au delà du strict nécessaire, et que la voie fluviale, en son temps, soit complètement débarrassée de toutes ces entraves de nature quelconque.

La note de votre Excellence du 31 Mai, sans s'expliquer aussi nettement que nous l'eussions désiré, nous donne du moins quelque espoir de voir nos légitimes remontrances à ce sujet écoutées, ainsi que cela a eu déjà lieu par rapport à notre demande de ne pas créer des obstacles à la libre navigation sur le Danube en amont de l'embouchure du Timok, ce que la Sublime Porte a accepté par la note que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser le 3 courant.

Mais il nous reste le devoir d'insister aussi sur ce que la propriété de nos nationaux sur le parcours ou dans les ports du Danube, consistant soit en bateaux soit en marchandises, s'il n'a pas été possible de la retirer de cette partie du fleuve avant le commencement des hostilités et la publication des mesures prises à cet égard par les belligérants, soit respectée conformément aux principes généralement reconnus du droit international. Le droit des gens protège par *mi* et par *tuo* la propriété des neutres, et il nous semble absolument inadmissible de priver la propriété de nos nationaux sur le Danube de la garantie de cette protection. Nous ne pouvons pas non plus, d'ailleurs, admettre que, quant à l'application des principes du droit maritime formulés dans la Déclaration de Paris du 16 Avril, 1856, il y ait une différence essentielle entre la navigation sur un fleuve international tel que le Danube et la navigation sur mer.

Les navires qui naviguent sur le Danube hissent le pavillon national au même titre que les bâtiments de mer. En grande partie les navires qui parcourent le Bas Danube appartiennent même à cette dernière sorte. Les normes légales qui régissent le mouvement naval sur le Bas Danube sont parfaitement analogues sur tous les points essentiels à celles qui règlent la navigation maritime. De même que nul n'affirmera que les articles de la Déclaration de Paris ne s'appliquent pas aux navires neutres qui se trouvent dans des ports de belligérant et à leurs cargaisons, quoique la souveraineté territoriale de la Puissance belligérante sur ses ports de mer et ses côtes s'exerce d'une manière bien plus absolue que celle de la Turquie sur les eaux du Bas Danube, de même l'opinion soutenue par la Sublime Porte que la disposition de ces articles ne s'étendent pas sur les ports du Danube ne saurait prévaloir.

Or, si la Porte, dans les instructions adressées au Généralissime Ottoman, a abandonné uniquement à son jugement d'interdire à volonté la navigation sur le Danube, d'arrêter les bateaux sauf indemnité et d'en disposer sous menace des peines les plus rigoureuses, elle a dépassé de beaucoup déjà, a notre sens, les limites des droits qui lui sont dévoulus même en temps de guerre, et a porté atteinte aux droits des neutres tant en général qu'en ce qui concerne particulièrement les conditions locales du Bas Danube. Lorsque, de plus, le Commandant-en-chef de l'armée Ottomane, en vertu des instructions reçues, osé supprimer la navigation sur tout le parcours du fleuve où il baigne le territoire Ottoman sans égard à la question si le passage de bateaux par ces parties du Danube est ou non réellement exclu par les exigences de la situation militaire lorsqu'il menace indistinctement tous les commandants et conducteurs de bateaux qui contreviendraient à cette prohibition des peines dont la loi martiale frappe l'espionage, et lorsqu'il ordonne la saisie et la confiscation des navires, y compris la cargaison, qui seraient trouvés en contravention, en n'en exceptant que les cargaisons des bateaux qui ont été retenus jusqu'au 21 Mai dans les ports du Danube, nous ne pouvons alors nous empêcher de voir dans ces mesures une infraction si éclatante et si peu justifiable aux principes du droit des gens et à nos droits particuliers de neutres que nous ne saurions d'aucune manière en admettre l'exécution.

Lorsqu'enfin au surplus l'action du Commandant-en-chef Ottoman se manifeste par des saisies de bateaux et de cargaisons de propriété de neutres opérées par les troupes Turques dans des ports de la rive gauche du Danube et sanctionnées en suite par les décisions des autorités Ottomanes, il ne nous est plus permis alors de méconnaître la gravité de la situation créée au mépris du droit international par de semblables procédés, ni de manquer au devoir qui en résulte pour nous d'y opposer la protestation la plus sérieuse.

M. le Comte Andrassy, en me prescrivant de définir cette situation à l'adresse de la Sublime Porte d'une manière claire et précise, m'a ordonné en même temps de réclamer d'urgence de la part du Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman l'entier redressement de nos griefs.

Si d'un côté nous ne voulons pas gêner les opérations des belligérants sur le Danube et si nous avons imposé à tous capitaines et conducteurs des bateaux l'obligation de respecter les lois et principes du droit international qui règlent les relations de commerce et de navigation entre neutres et belligérants, nous ne pouvons faire à moins, de l'autre côté, que d'exiger aussi de la Sublime Porte la stricte observation de ces mêmes principes et le respect dû à nos droits de neutres.

Par rapport au libre exercise de la navigation Danubienne en général nous attendions de la Turquie une déclaration impliquant des engagements identiques à ceux pris par la Russie.

En outre nous devons insister particulièrement sur les points suivants:—Aucun navire Austro-Hongrois retenu par suite des événements de la guerre dans quelque port du Danube ne doit être arrêté ni confisqué tant qu'il n'a pas manqué par le transport de troupes, de contrebande de guerre, aux devoirs de la neutralité. La propriété de nos nationaux chargée à bord de tels navires doit être également respectée, et nous faisons encore appel aux principes fondamentaux du droit des gens en réclamant pour la sécurité de leurs personnes et de leurs biens la protection des autorités locales, et le maintien de tous les droits garantis à nos sujets résidant en Turquie par les Traités. Pour tous dommages causés à nos nationaux par des réquisitions quelconques exercées par les autorités civiles ou militaires Ottomanes sur leurs biens et pratiquées soit sous forme légale aucune, soit sous la forme d'une sorte de droit de préemption, nous réclamons, sauf cas de véritable force majeure amenée par les circonstances de la guerre, pleine et entière indemnité, de même que pour tout autre préjudice occasionné à nos nationaux par la faute de ces autorités.

Enfin nous ne pouvons omettre ici d'accentuer particulièrement les obligations

imposées aux Puissances belligérantes par les stipulations du Traité de 1871 établissant la neutralité, et, par conséquent, l'inviolabilité par des opérations de guerre des ouvrages et établissements créés par la Commission Européenne du Danube à l'embouchure du fleuve, ainsi que de l'organisation administrative et technique de cette Commission. Le point de vue auquel la Sublime Porte s'est placé à cet égard, après la note que votre Excellence a bien voulu adresser à M. de Herbert le 10 du mois passé, a soulevé chez le Cabinet Impérial et Royal des objections sérieuses qu'il ne croit pas devoir dissimuler. Si les établissements de la Commission en vertu de leur caractère neutre doivent rester exclus de toute combinaison de stratégie défensive ou offensive, l'opinion énoncée par la Sublime Porte que la Commission du Danube ait à subir le sort des éventualités de la guerre comme force majeure nous paraît absolument insoutenable tant que l'intention de l'une des Puissances belligérantes de respecter cette neutralité est patente. Nous attachons du prix à obtenir à ce sujet de la part du Gouvernement Ottoman des assurances satisfaisantes.

Le refus de la Sublime Porte d'admettre le pavillon-signal de la Commission Européenne comme marque distinctive de ses constructions et de ses bâtiments est également dénué à nos yeux de justification. Au point de vue pratique un argument irrécusable se fait valoir en faveur de l'admission de ce pavillon-signal au moins pour la durée des hostilités. C'est que le pavillon Ottoman, arboré dans les circonstances actuelles sur les bateaux et établissements de la Commission en compromettrait infailliblement le caractère de neutralité. Le pavillon particulier de la Commission n'est pas d'ailleurs une innovation. Il a toujour été en usage de la même façon qui est proposée spécialement en vue des complications belliqueuses du moment.

En demandant à la Commission Européenne du Danube de se placer sous le drapeau Ottoman, la Sublime Porte revendique un droit qui ne lui appartient pas, et qui lui a été contesté effectivement à une époque antérieure. Il est aussi certain que le caractère éminemment international de cette institution lui crée une position exempte de la souveraineté Ottomane que d'autre part il n'est pas douteux que les droits territoriaux de la Sublime Porte ne souffrent aucune atteinte par l'emploi de ce pavillon-signal qui ne représente aucune Puissance étrangère. Ainsi que la Croix-Rouge de la Convention de Genève est généralement reconnue comme emblème d'inviolabilité au milieu des foudres de la guerre et que la nature de cet emblème empruntée aux armes de la Confédération Helvétique ne donne ombrage à personne, de même la Sublime Porte à notre sens ne devrait pas avoir de difficultés à admettre ce pavillon-signal qui, n'étant qu'un simple emblème distinctif comme tel cependant est une nécessité.

La tendance de la note Circulaire dans laquelle votre Excellence a traité dernièrement ce sujet nous paraît susceptible par conséquent d'une modification que nous désirons vivement voir se réaliser.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté l'Empereur et Roi aime à croire que la Sublime Porte voudra bien reconnaître la justesse des observations et des réclamations que j'ai eu l'honneur de développer à votre Excellence, et que je suis chargé d'appuyer avec énergie, et il se livre à l'espoir qu'elle prendra sans délai les dispositions voulues pour leur donner pleine satisfaction.

Agréez, &c.

No. 113.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 663.) *Therapia, June 25, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Porte applied a short time ago to the Bey of Tunis for 400 mules for the Turkish artillery, as his Highness was unable to furnish men or money for the war with Russia. The Bey replied that he was unable to give the whole of that number, but that he would collect 200 which would be ready as soon as the Turkish Government could send transports under proper protection for their conveyance to Constantinople.

I have been informed that steps have been taken to bring these animals here. They would be very useful, as the Turkish artillery is seriously deficient in horses.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 114.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 664.) *Therapia, June 25, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE been informed that a good many wealthy Greeks, and other Christians, living at Constantinople and on the Bosphorus, are sending away their families to different parts of Europe under the apprehension that events of a serious nature may shortly take place in the city and its suburbs. As far as I can judge, there is no ground at present for their alarm, as the Mussulman population of Constantinople appears to be perfectly quiet, and I have not learnt that any ill-feeling has been shown by it against the Christians. I attach very little importance to the panics which constantly seize upon the native and European population of Pera and Galata, which find a ready echo in the foreign press. There is no doubt, however, that this alarm is shared by a good many persons, and, what is curious, I have been assured that a similar alarm is felt by the Turks, who, instead of wishing to massacre the Christians, fear that the Christians may rise and massacre them. The one event is, perhaps, as likely as the other.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 115.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 666.) *Therapia, June 25, 1877.*

My Lord,

I SPOKE again to Safvet Pasha to-day on the subject of the complaints of the Cretans against the Turkish Government and authorities as reported in Mr. Consul Sandwith's despatches, and urged upon his Excellency, as I have done on previous occasions, the importance of satisfying any reasonable demands that the Christian inhabitants of the island might have, in order to avoid a fresh outbreak of discontent amongst them and another insurrection. I observed that from the reports that had reached me, I was induced to believe that the present Governor of the island, Samih Pasha, was not quite fitted to administer its affairs at so critical a period. I added that I had received information that the inhabitants of the district of Rethymo had already refused to pay the tithes, and that there were already symptoms of resistance to the Government in other districts of Crete.

His Excellency replied that he was aware that Sami Pasha was not equal to the task assigned to him, and that he regretted that a better man had not been sent as Governor to the island. The Porte, his Excellency said, was desirous of taking into the fullest consideration the complaints and grievances of the Christians of Crete, and of making such changes and reforms in the administration of the island as might be really necessary. For this purpose it had invited the Cretans to send six representatives to Constantinople, three Mussulmans and three Christians, to come to an arrangement with the Government, but the answer it had received to this proposal was that the Porte itself should send a Commissioner to the island to confer, and to come to an understanding, with the Christian inhabitants. The Porte, his Excellency added, would not agree to this demand, which it considered offensive.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 116.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 668.) *Therapia, June 26, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN consequence of the publication of the article upon the Turkish Chambers, an extract from which was inclosed in my despatch No. 648 of the 20th instant, the "Levant Herald" has been suppressed. This measure appears to me to be illegal, even although Constantinople has been declared, according to the law, in a state of siege. The newspaper might have been "suspended," but to "suppress" it is a violation of property, which could only be justified by a judicial decree. I have

pointed this out to Safvet Pasha, who readily admitted to me that he disapproved of this arbitrary proceeding, and promised that if the editor, Mr. Whittaker, would remain quiet, he would be very soon allowed to publish his newspaper again.

The suppression of the "Levant Herald" has been brought about by the Palace party, who are hostile to the Parliament, and are doing their best to persuade the Sultan that it is a dangerous institution, which will deprive him of his authority, and perhaps of his throne.

The article in question is regarded by every one else as a very fair and moderate one.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 117.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 671.) *Therapia, June 26, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HEARD two days ago from the Persian Minister that, notwithstanding the distinct promises of the Porte that the Commissioner appointed to inquire into the outrages committed upon Persian subjects at Medina should leave for that city at once, he was still in Constantinople. Mohsin Khan further complained that in spite of the order alleged to have been given by the Porte to Nassir Pasha not to occupy the islet in the Shat-el-Arab, the right to which was in dispute between Turkey and Persia, that functionary was still resolved to retain it in his possession. Mohsin Khan was very much irritated at what he considered flagrant breaches of good faith on the part of the Turkish Government.

I spoke very strongly on the subject to Safvet Pasha yesterday, and urged upon him the importance of not allowing the Porte to be exposed to this accusation, and of not giving just cause of complaint to Persia. His Excellency said that the Commissioner had delayed his departure on the pretence of having some domestic matters to settle, but that he had now been directed peremptorily to leave for Medina this week. As to the occupation by Nassir Pasha of the islet in the Shat-el-Arab, if he had persisted in it he had acted contrary to the orders of the Porte, which he would be called upon at once to obey.

I have telegraphed to Colonel Nixon to ascertain whether Mohsin Khan's complaint of the proceedings of Nassir Pasha be well founded, and whether it be true that the Pasha had received orders from the Porte not to occupy the islet in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 118.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 672.) *Therapia, June 26, 1877.*

My Lord,

MR. CONSUL KIRBY GREEN has appealed to me in several despatches (copies of which he has forwarded to your Lordship) to intercede with the Porte for Captain Gion and the Priest Don Primo, the Mirdite Chiefs who have been made prisoners by the Turkish troops. I have represented to Safvet Pasha that it would be consistent with good policy and humanity if the Turkish Government were to treat these captives with leniency. His Excellency said at once that he quite agreed with me, and that he would use any influence he might possess to protect them from any severe punishment, although they might merit it. They are still, I am informed, at Salonica; they are to be brought here, and Mr. Saudison tells me that he has reason to believe from the inquiries that he has made that they will not be harshly treated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 119.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 673.)
Therapia, June 26, 1877.

My Lord,

ACTING-CONSUL JOLY sent your Lordship copy of his despatch to me of the 9th instant, inclosing copy of a letter from Mr. Marato, British Vice-Consul at Aivali, giving the details of the murder of three Christians by a band of men alleged to be Bashi-Bazouks.

I at once brought Mr. Marato's statement to the notice of the Porte, and I am now informed that very strong orders were immediately sent to the Governor of Brussa on the subject, and that he has replied that he had lost no time in making full inquiries about the murders in question. It would appear that on the 21st May last, a band of brigands, not Bashi-Bazouks, to whom it is now the fashion to attribute all such deeds, attacked four Christians going to Balukhissar; they killed three of them and wounded the fourth. The chief of the band and one of his companions have already been captured and are in the hands of the police. The Governor has, he asserts, taken measures for the capture of the two other criminals.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 120.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 675.)
Therapia, June 27, 1877.

My Lord,

I have the honour to inclose a translation from the Italian into French of a letter from Monsignor C. Pooten, Catholic Archbishop of Scutari and Antivari, to the Catholic Armenian Patriarch, Monsignor Hassoun.

As the atrocities alleged to have been committed upon the Montenegrins have caused a deep impression in England, it may be as well that, for the sake of truth, the other side of the question should be heard. In the cases mentioned by the Archbishop the victims have not been Mussulmans, but Roman Catholics, equally odious to the Orthodox Greeks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 120.

Monsignor Pooten to Monsignor Hassoun.

Scutari, le 1 Juin, 1877.

Monseigneur,

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser réception de votre estimée lettre du 18 du mois dernier, et je m'empresse de satisfaire aux demandes de votre Béatitude assez brièvement, car je suis en train de partir pour faire une tournée dans mon Archidiocèse de Scutari et d'Antivari, que je ne puis pas différer à cause de la gravité des circonstances.

La seule église de Scutari possède un nombre d'environ 30,000 Catholiques et celle d'Antivari près de 3,000; mes nombreuses paroisses sont les plus exposées aux incursions des Monténégrins. Chez nous les Monténégrins sont haïs et exécrés non moins par les Catholiques que par les Turcs. Et qui jamais pourrait avoir de l'estime pour des gens pareils? Au début de la présente guerre, dans une de mes paroisses confinant au Monténégro, ces hordes sauvages ont attaqué la maison du curé, qui à peine avait pu se sauver; ils enfoncèrent les portes et les fenêtres et pillèrent tout ce qu'ils y trouvèrent, calices, crucifixs, missels, habits d'autel, registres de décès et de baptême, et jusque les huiles saintes; ils revinrent plus tard et en vrais vandales ils enlevèrent même les planches, les verres et démolirent le reste. Il y encore peu de jours deux jeunes Catholiques de ma paroisse de Livasi en deçà de Scutari, lorsqu'ils dormaient dans leur barque au rivage du lac de Scutari, furent attaqués par ces barbares de Monténégro et nonobstant les humbles prières de ces jeunes innocents à peine âgés de 18 ans, ils furent assassinés impitoyablement; ces monstres infernaux leur coupèrent les têtes probablement pour en faire un trophée auprès de leurs supérieurs. Je puis assurer votre Béatitude que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le

Sultan ne peut pas trouver de meilleurs sujets que les Catholiques de l'Albanie. Quant à moi je saisis toutes les occasions pour inculquer à mes ouailles les maximes de la religion Catholique, qui impose le devoir de se soumettre, de vénérer et d'aimer son Souverain, quelle que soit sa religion.

Sa Grandeur l'Evêque d'Alessio, Monseigneur Malczynki, Polonais d'origine, a fait tout son possible pour arrêter le coupable mouvement d'insurrection d'une partie de la Mirditie qui avait été égarée par des suggestions venues du dehors. Il avait même suspendu de l'office sacerdotal le prêtre Don Primo Dochi, dont votre Béatitude portait plainte de la part de son Excellence Safvet Pacha.

Ces égarés de la Mirditie se sont actuellement repentis on ne peut plus; ils ont été battus par les vaillantes troupes Ottomanes.

J'entends dire que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Sultan veut le traiter avec indulgence; ce serait éminemment sage et politique. Les Mirdites sont un peuple pauvre et attaché à leur religion. Ils ont l'obligation de donner des contingents à l'armée Turque en temps de guerre, et en effet ils ont apporté souvent une aide efficace aux troupes Impériales. Je ne crois jamais que tous les Mirdites aient pris part à la dernière échauffourée; au contraire, je suis d'avis que le nombre des égarés est trop restreint et ceux-là se sont déjà repentis. J'entends dire que le susdit prêtre Don Primo Dochi a été conduit avec ses compagnons à Constantinople en état d'arrestation.

Comme il est un de ceux qui méritent compassion, je prie votre Béatitude de vouloir bien interposer ses bons offices auprès de son Altesse le Grand Vézir afin que, eu égard à son caractère sacerdotal, il ne soit pas écroué en prison et traité comme ses compagnons.

Les hostilités ont de nouveau recommencé entre les troupes Ottomanes et les Monténégrins. Que le bon Dieu veuille accorder la victoire à l'armée Impériale et en cela j'exprime les vœux communs de tous les Catholiques de l'Albanie et je prie votre Béatitude de vouloir bien les transmettre à son Excellence le Grand Vézir Edhem Pacha.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) C. POOTEN,
Archevêque de Scutari et d'Antivari.

No. 121.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 678.)
Therapia, June 27, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to the report addressed to your Lordship by Mr. Calocherino, British Vice-Consul at Candia, on the 3rd instant (a copy of which he sent to me), relating to sacrileges alleged to have been committed by Turkish soldiers in two chapels in the Island of Crete, I have the honour to state that I brought the matter at once to the notice of Safvet Pasha. His Excellency said that, according to a telegram received from the Vali of Crete, the accounts forwarded by Mr. Calocherino were very much exaggerated. Some excesses of no grave character have, it is admitted, been committed by soldiers, into whose conduct inquiries have been instituted by the authorities. The Christians themselves, the Vali declares, now admit that their complaints were exaggerated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 122.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 680.)
Therapia, June 27, 1877.

My Lord,

THE successful campaign against Montenegro, and its occupation by the Turkish troops, have given the greatest satisfaction to the Mussulman, and perhaps to some other, subjects of the Sultan. The way in which these brave but barbarous mountaineers have so long defied the Ottoman arms and ravaged Ottoman territory, and the protection hitherto afforded them by the European Powers whenever they have been at the point of defeat and punishment, has, of course, a good deal contributed to this

feeling. It is earnestly to be hoped that the possession of the Principality by the Turks will not be accompanied by acts of cruelty and revenge. As the Montenegrins appear to have been indulging in their old habits of horribly mutilating the Mussulmans that have fallen into their hands, it is to be feared that they may be exposed to retaliation. I understand that the strictest orders have been sent by the Porte to the Turkish commanders to prevent such being the case. It is to be hoped that the Turkish Government is fully alive by this time to the effect upon European public opinion of outrages committed by Mussulmans upon Christians.

I have endeavoured to ascertain what are the views of the Porte with regard to Montenegro, if it be allowed to reap the fruits of its conquest, which is, however, perhaps more than doubtful. As far as one can judge of public opinion in Turkey, it would appear to be in favour of forming the Black Mountain into a new vilayet, over which, some persons urge, a Christian Governor should be placed to satisfy Europe. The idea in the palace seems to be that Montenegro should be allowed to return to its previous state of semi-independence, under the suzerainty of the Sultan, sufficient guarantees being taken for its future good conduct in its relations with the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—Safvet Pasha informs me that he has received assurances from Redif Pasha, the Minister of War, that the troops in Montenegro will strictly respect the feeble, and will in no way maltreat the old men, women, and children.

A. H. L.

No. 123.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 7.*)

(No. 681. Confidential.)
Therapia, June 27, 1877.

My Lord,

I HEAR from a trustworthy source that Prince Gortchakow's answer to your Lordship's letter has made a profound impression at the Porte, and has caused great alarm, especially that paragraph in it which refers to the future possession of Constantinople. The Porte sees in the declarations of Russia not an intention to lop off a limb of the Empire, but to destroy it altogether. I understand that, although the text of the letter has been in the hands of the Ministers for several days, no translation has yet been made of it for the Sultan, as is usually the case with such documents. Nor have the newspapers been allowed to publish it.

When the determination of Russia to destroy the Turkish Empire is publicly known, it may not only lead to a resolve on the part of the Mahommedans to fight to the death, but, some persons believe, to great dangers to the Christian populations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 124.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 7.*)

(No. 682.)
Therapia, June 27, 1877.

My Lord,

A CIRCULAR was forwarded yesterday by the Porte to its Agents abroad, for communication to the Governments to which they are accredited, with reference to the capture and destruction of three Turkish merchant vessels by a Russian cruizer in the Black Sea, to which my despatch No. 662 of June 25 relates. The facts that have, I understand, come to the knowledge of the Turkish Government are the following:—Two Russian steamers belonging to the Russian Steam Navigation Company (and not one as, I believe, is stated in the Circular), armed for war purposes, made a dash from the Crimea through the Turkish blockade. On nearing the opposite coast they fell in with three small Turkish vessels. The crew having been taken out from one of them, it was then destroyed by a torpedo. But the other two were blown up by torpedoes with their crews, who are said to have perished.

It is against this alleged act of wanton barbarity that the Porte protests in its Circular.

It is to be earnestly hoped that there may be some exaggeration in the report of the occurrence that has reached the Turkish Government. A wanton murder of the innocent crews of trading Turkish vessels, coupled with the atrocities alleged to have been committed in Circassia and Armenia upon the Mussulmans, will cause a feeling of exasperation among the Turks which may lead to the most fatal consequences. If it be true that Russia is prepared to carry on a religious war in this fashion, some attempt to stop their doing so might be justified on the grounds of humanity and of the threatened safety of the Christian populations of Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 125.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 7.*)

(No. 683.)
Therapia, June 27, 1877.

My Lord,

IT is nearly a week since I have received any telegraphic information from Sir Arnold Kemball respecting the war in Armenia. This is owing to the orders which were given to the telegraphic authorities throughout Turkey not to receive any message in cypher. The Minister of War promised to make an exception in favour of Sir Arnold Kemball, and to send orders at once on the subject. It would appear that they have either not been sent or have not been obeyed. I have spoken repeatedly on the subject to the Grand Vizier and to Safvet Pasha, and have obtained the most positive assurances that Sir Arnold's telegrams in cypher are to be received. A fresh order to that effect was given in Mr. Sandison's presence two days ago.

It is very vexatious that these difficulties should have been thrown in Sir Arnold Kemball's way when events of considerable importance have evidently taken place in Armenia, which, as no authentic account of them has been allowed to transpire, have probably been unfavourable to the Turkish arms.

I have the honour to inclose copies of the two last reports that I have received from Sir Arnold Kemball dated 11th and 19th instant. The letter referred to in his despatch of the 17th has not reached me.* It may have been purposely stopped, as it evidently contains the account of a severe defeat incurred by the Turkish right wing at Tahur.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 125.

Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.

Khorasan, June 14, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE little to add on this occasion to the contents of the two telegrams I had the honour to address to your Excellency yesterday evening, of which copies are subjoined; nor will I trouble your Excellency with speculations on the course of events, depending in the main upon the issue of the threatened attack of Kars.

The disposition of the Turkish forces remains unaltered, as reported in my letter No. , excepting only the withdrawal of the right wing to Delibaba, as announced in P.S. This movement proved to be unauthorized, and the troops from Molla Suleiman and Toprak Kalaa marched yesterday to resume their former positions.

A field battery from Erzeroum has replaced at Hassan Kalaa the one moved thence to the head-quarter camp.

Captain McCalmont, writing from Olti on the 9th instant, says, "There are 8 battalions and some zaptiehs (said to be 300) encamped within one mile of this under Rashid Pasha. The possibility of a forward move is spoken of, but neither of us thinks it probable. On our way in yesterday we met the cavalry *en route* to the head-quarter camp via Narriman, we were informed 1,000 strong. I should say there were about 700 or 800. They consisted of 2 batalions of Bashi-Bazouks and some 350 Circassians. The latter, though their horses are too small, looked uncommonly well. They were well armed with Winchester and other rifles and swords, and the

* See No. 97.

men are fine-looking, and certainly sit up pretty straight. The Baski-Bazouks are badly armed; their lances are rudely pointed at both ends, and a few have fire-arms and swords as well, as far as I could judge at the moment. Neither horses nor men can be compared to the Circassians. We heard that the Russian cavalry had been beyond Narriman. There were 2,200 men here, 1,000 of whom were cavalry, for three days. They left for Pennek on Wednesday, and we are told that there are no Russians now on this side of Ardahan. As far as we can learn, the Russians paid for all their provisions while here. The road we took from Zewin is a very tortuous one over the mountains, thirty-six miles viâ Narriman. It cannot be considered practicable for artillery, although it would not be impossible to drag guns over it. Six miles from this a precipitous spur has to be passed over, which it was even a matter of difficulty to ride."

The Wan force maintains its position at Barghiri. Moukhtar Pasha informs me that it has been largely reinforced by Kurdish irregular levies, horse and foot. The Russians have pushed their reconnaissances up to the Turkish outposts, but have not, as rumoured at Erzeroum, advanced in force in that direction. The Russians indeed appear to have postponed all aggressive movements to the desired reduction of Kars.

I have employed the interval of idleness in again visiting the head-quarter camp, and in examining the pass of Delibaba and adjacent roads. (The inclosed sketches were made by Captain Norman, late of the Bengal Staff Corps, who accompanied me in my excursions.) The position taken up by Moukhtar Pasha is one of peculiar strength. It would, however, need double the force at his immediate disposal, with the full complement of artillery, to defend it. The pass of Delibaba and the line of Molla Suleiman, can be turned in more than one direction, and would become untenable if intercepted in rear by a superior force marching from Kars, viâ Milliduz and Mezingherd, on Khorasan. During the present lull, I purpose to proceed as far as Toprak Kalaa, returning by Bashkeui and Gulentab, in order to ascertain the state of the roads, which are reported to be practicable in that quarter. One of the two battalions which I found encamped here has returned to its former position near Gulentab.

Moukhtar Pasha is endeavouring by constant field exercise and drill to bring his raw levies into training. He is also organizing his irregular horsemen, particularly the Circassians. Their numbers are increasing, but are hardly acquiring much effective strength from the Bashi-Bazouk and Kurdish elements.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. KEMBALL.

P.S.—In the cavalry action at Beyli Ahmed, the Turkish force consisted of 150 Nizam cavalry and 1,200 Circassian horsemen, under Moosa Pasha, with two small Whitworth Galloper guns attached to the Nizam. Their loss did not exceed fifty killed and wounded. The missing in considerable numbers proved to have taken refuge at Kars.

The sortie on Friday, the 8th, was a small affair, as may be inferred from the loss of seven men wounded only on the side of the Turks.

A. K.

Inclosure 2 in No. 125.

Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.

Erzeroum, June 19, 1877.

Sir,

I HAD scarcely written my despatch of the 17th instant, when, as therein mentioned, my attention was called to bodies of troops moving on the range of heights which separate the valley containing the Deli Baba stream from that in which Tai Khojah is situated. As these troops could clearly be nothing but Russian, I deemed it prudent no longer to defer my return to Erzeroum, the more especially that Khorassan being quite within reach of a razzia, and the direct road from Deli Baba to Keuprikeui being open to the Russians, my escape might soon become impossible, save by a *détour* over the mountain to the Olti road. That road, too, if Moukhtar Pasha should have carried out his intention as reported to me by Captain Trotter of withdrawing all his troops from Olti to his own camp, would be again at the

command of the Russians, and probably patrolled by their cavalry, I accordingly left Khorassan and arrived here on the following morning.

I mention these circumstances because I learn from undoubted sources that the Russians are particularly anxious to possess themselves of my person, to which end they detached two bodies of cavalry to overtake me or intercept my flight from the field of battle on Saturday, and this because they ascribe to me an active part in advising or controlling Turkish military operations, if not in this quarter, during the last Servo-Turkish war.

On my journey here I met the reinforcements mentioned in my last letter, two battalions half-way between Khorassan and Keuprikeui, the remainder one hour out of Hassan Kalé on their way ostensibly to Deli Baba. Your Excellency is aware that they would not in any case march beyond Khorassan, and would more probably be stopped at Keuprikeui by the advance of the Russians. Heavy firing, it seems, was heard in the direction of Keuprikeui by the Turkish outposts on the Déné Boyoun, and intelligence has since been received that the Russians have occupied Keuprikeui and advanced their outposts as far as Ekshad, half-way to Hassan Kalé. If this announcement be not premature the Russians will have established themselves in a position most easily defensible, and one from which, if the whole of General Derkokhasoff's force be afield there, Moukhtar Pasha will certainly not be able to dislodge him, and must then leave Erzeroum to its fate, at least during the time necessary for him to come to the relief of the city by striking across the mountain to the Olti road—no easy operation for an army accompanied by artillery and ill-provided with transport and commissariat. It is true that General Derkokhasoff may think himself strong enough to attempt the capture of Erzeroum by a *coup de main*, and if well informed of the condition of the garrison, he would know that so bold a stroke would be fully justified by the chances it presents of success. If Kars should have fallen Moukhtar Pasha's flank march will have been itself rendered very hazardous.

I regretted to find on my arrival here that under general instructions from Constantinople, my two last cypher telegrams had been refused at the office, nor have I since been able to communicate to your Excellency owing to the derangement of the line between Erzinghian and Sious.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. KEMBALL.

No. 126.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 685.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 27, 1877.*

WITH reference to Mr. Consul Moore's despatch to me of the 26th May (copy of which was sent by him to your Lordship), I am informed by the Grand Vizier, to whom I had directed one of the Embassy Dragomans to speak on the subject, that the Minister of War had received a complaint that the Turkish regular troops had been withdrawn from Jerusalem, and that the maintenance of public order and security was now only confided to Mustahfiz (or 3rd ban of the reserve). Redif Pasha had replied to this complaint that Mustahfiz were as competent and ready to perform this duty as the regular forces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 127.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 686.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 27, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a confidential despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Prevesa, respecting intrigues in Epirus. I have sent a copy of Mr. Blakeney's despatch to Her Majesty's Minister at Athens.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 127.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)

Prevesa, June 16, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Excellency's information, translation of Mr. Kypriotis' despatch, marked "Confidential," of the 8th instant, relative to the intriguing of certain individuals to create a disturbance in this province, but whose attempts to do so is to be hoped will be baffled by the good sense of the very persons from whom depends almost entirely the success of the above scheme.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 127.

Mr. Kypriotis to Vice-Consul Blakeney.

(Translation.)

(Confidential.)

Janina, June 8, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that since the return from Greece of C. Aravandinos, the resolution taken by the Chiefs of Lacca, as reported to you in my previous confidential letter, has undergone a material change, and has almost taken a turn to the opposite direction. Aravandinos' returning on the 31st ultimo, instead of bringing with him the promised money and other things required for the insurrection, asked the brotherhood to sign for him a document which, as he assured them, will induce Ipsilanti to assume the leadership and also the maintenance of the insurrection in Epirus, because the Greek Government hesitating to act, the different societies in Greece have come to an agreement, and are beginning with their own private means the work of independence, and this without any loss of time, in order to compel the Greek Government to take part in the struggle immediately. The Chiefs, hearing empty words, a thing quite inconsistent with former assurances, have discovered what they wished from the very first to ascertain, that the intended movement is an attempt made by individuals, and perhaps by private persons, and not a concerted plan of the Greek Government. They, therefore, repent of having in good faith acted under the message to "get ready" sent to them by one of their relatives at Corfu, and owing to which they have advanced in their preparations to such a degree as to place them in a dangerous position in case of treachery. Consequently, in withdrawing they took care to correct the rash step they had taken, and this is the reason, no doubt, why, during last week, Mitzos, who has the appearance of a brave and honest man, was the first to come to this Consular Agency, and after confessing to me what you already know from my former confidential communications as well as all that which took place since the return of Aravandinos, as stated above. He also confessed, with a tone that denoted sincerity, that he not only refuses for the future to assist in a movement which is under the direction of unconscientious and desperate speculators, but that he will set his face against it and take up arms in favour of the Government, should anyone start such a movement in his district. He added, however, that he will offer himself and his children to be sacrificed at his country's altar should the Greek Government undertake to fight for their independence.

In the same style and spirit these words were repeated to me on the following day by the other Isimói, who has the appearance of an old man rather than that of a warrior.

The truth of their confessions pleads for the sincerity of their assurances just as any sworn promises would have done. However, under the present state of things, the turn of events might prove stronger than any well meant resolutions and promises.

I am now informed that Aravandinos is on very intimate terms with the Italian Consulate, which receives and forwards now a great number of telegrams in cypher.

I have, &c.

(Signed) B. KYPRIOTIS.

No. 128.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 136.)

My Lord,

Athens, June 28, 1877.

IT will be useful to your Lordship to be made acquainted with the following additional particulars in connection with the detention at Corfu of the cases of arms belonging to the Ottoman Government, which formed the subject of my despatch No. 135 of yesterday's date.

The Austrian Lloyd's steamer, upon which the cases were originally embarked at Constantinople for Prevesa, lands such goods which she may have for the latter place at Corfu, for transhipment on board the branch steamer of the same Company, and goes on herself from Corfu to Trieste.

As there is some interval between the arrival of the one steamer at Corfu and the departure of the other for Prevesa, the cases in question were not directly transshipped from one steamer to the other, but were landed and deposited in the bonded warehouse of the Company, and afterwards re-shipped on board the smaller steamer.

They appear to have been actually so re-shipped, and to have been on the point of departure, when the Customs authorities, in consequence of the interference and protest of the Russian Consul, requested the Commander of the steamer to disembark them.

The latter and the Austrian Lloyd's Agent there, I believe, consented to take them off the steamer and to place them in a lighter, but would not consent to re-land them nor to give them up to the Customs authorities.

The steamer then sailed without them.

Having learnt that the Austrian Lloyd's agent wished them to be shipped on board one of the Austrian steamers for Trieste, M. Tricoupi had telegraphed to the authorities at Corfu that the Hellenic Government would not object to such a proceeding if the Austrian Consul at Corfu made any request to that effect.

I had received a telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Corfu on Saturday night the 23rd instant, informing me that the Russian Consul had protested against the transmission of the cases in question, and when I saw M. Tricoupi on the following day (Sunday) I found that the Russian Minister had actively supported his Consul's protest, and insisted upon their detention.

M. Tricoupi, after consulting two or three works upon international law, as well as the opinion of three of the best Greek lawyers, which had been taken by the Hellenic Government last year upon receiving a somewhat similar demand from Photindes Bey, had come to the conclusion that the transmission of the cases would constitute a breach of neutrality, of which the Russian Minister would have a just right to complain, more especially as the cases had been landed, and been, as it were, under the territorial jurisdiction of Greece for a time. He contended that the Hellenic Government ought not to permit any part of its territory, and still less the neutralized Island of Corfu, to be made a depôt or storehouse for the arms belonging to either of the belligerent Powers.

Although M. Tricoupi may possibly have taken an overstrained view of the neutral duties of Greece in the present case, he has evidently acted from the most conscientious motives, and without any wish or intention to favour one belligerent at the expense of the other.

The notification which the Hellenic Government has so unexpectedly received from the Porte upon the subject is therefore as uncalled for as it is unseemly and discourteous.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 129.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 139.)

My Lord,

Athens, June 29, 1877.

I OMITTED to state in my despatches Nos. 135 and 136 of the 27th and 28th instant, that the threatening announcement which was made to M. Tricoupi by my Ottoman colleague, respecting the detention of the arms or accoutrements

belonging to the Porte at Corfu, had been originally drawn up in the form of an official note, worded, as I understand, in exact accordance with instructions which Photiades Bey had received from Constantinople by telegraph.

The note had been signed by Photiades Bey, and he took it with him to deliver to M. Tricoupi; but upon the latter declaring that it was equivalent to a declaration of war, he put it back in his pocket, and asked that the announcement might be considered to have been made verbally.

M. Tricoupi appears to have told him at once that any attempt on the part of the Porte to carry out its threat, and to take forcible possession of the arms in question, would be an act of hostility against Greece, as well as a violation of the neutral rights of Corfu, and that the Hellenic Government would defend those rights to the best of their power, besides invoking the assistance and protection of Great Britain and France and of other neutral Powers.

There are only two iron-clad ships in the Hellenic navy, viz., the "King George" and the "Queen Olga," both small ones, and they put to sea yesterday afternoon for Corfu, expecting to arrive to-morrow morning.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 130.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 62. Political.) *Galatz, July 2, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that I learn from Mr. Vice-Consul Brown that about 25,000 to 30,000 Russian troops have crossed the Danube at Ibraila: the bridge is, it appears, but little used, the troops passing to Matchin by steamers and boats, and only the Cossacks crossing the bridge on horseback. This would make a total of about 35,000 men crossed from Galatz and Ibraila, and the passage still continues from the latter place.

Russian Governors have been appointed both in Matchin and Toultcha, which last, I now learn, was occupied by the Russians on the 26th or 27th of last month.

Reports have been current of the murder and mutilation of some women at Matchin, but neither Mr. Brown nor I have been able to get any confirmation of these stories, which, moreover, differ in detail. Immediately on the evacuation of Matchin by the Turks some Bulgarians commenced robbing and burning Turkish houses, but the Russian Commander, General Zimmermann, went over and put a stop to this, and sent about fifty of them over to Ibraila under arrest. I have been told that a cross was painted on the east wall of the mosque, and several of stones over the Turkish graves damaged, but I am not inclined to believe this has been done—by the Russians, at any rate; I was in hopes of being able to visit Matchin to-morrow, but hear to-day that this is no longer allowed.

Prince Charles visited Ibraila incognito on the 30th ultimo.

The road to Reni has so far been repaired by the use of planks and cart-loads of earth that a considerable number of troops are expected to arrive here to-night.

During the excursion mentioned in my despatch No. 61, Political, of 28th June, I learnt that there was no large force in the hills immediately opposite Galatz.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

No. 131.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 582. Very Confidential.) *Paris, July 6, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN the despatches marked No. 574 and No. 575, which I had the honour to send to your Lordship by post on the day before yesterday, I reported to you, without comment, observations made by the Duc Decazes on the Russian terms of peace as stated to him by Count Münster, and on the despatch of the English fleet to Besika Bay.

In fact the language of the Duc Decazes simply confirmed the impressions with regard to the policy of France on the Eastern question, which I have recorded in numerous previous despatches.

France wishes an end to be put to the war because she fears it will paralyse Russia and other Powers, to whom she looks for help against Germany.

She desires so to direct her own course as to offend no foreign Power, but she is especially anxious not to offend Russia.

She is comparatively indifferent to Russian progress in the East, and would view with quite as much jealousy an increase of English as an increase of Russian influence in the eastern part of the Mediterranean.

She has no inclination to give any assistance, moral or material, to England in resisting Russian encroachments or in obtaining a counterpoise to them.

She thinks it possible that England may be forced into an alliance defensive and offensive with her against Germany by a German attack upon Holland and Belgium, and she is unremitting in her endeavours to spread the opinion in England that such an attack is probable.

Even in such a contingency she does not seem to contemplate an alliance with England unless she herself is actually threatened with invasion, nor does she appear to admit that under any circumstances she could be called upon to displease Russia by forwarding English interests in the Levant.

I do not conceive that these views proceed from any ill-will to England or any special partiality to Russia, they are the natural consequences of the position in which France has been placed by the results of her war with Germany. All other considerations have no weight with her in comparison with her anxiety for safety for the present from a German attack, or with her aspirations after a recovery, in the future, of her lost provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 132.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7, 2·30 P.M.)

(No. 237. Most Confidential.) *Therapia, July 7, 1877, 11 A.M.*
(Telegraphic.)

SULTAN has sent me copy of telegrams from Governor of Bosnia, stating that a body of 1,500 insurgents have been allowed by Austrian military authorities to assemble on the Turkish frontier at Serajevo, and another band of 2,000 at Belugh for the purpose of attacking Ottoka and Carolina.

They are amply provided with arms, and it is expected that they will cross immediately into Bosnia. They receive every help and encouragement from the Austrian military authorities, who furnish them with instructions and hold out promises of assistance in case of Turkish forces being sent against them, and whose evident intention it is to provoke Turkey and to bring on a case for war between her and Austria. His Majesty requests me to communicate the substance of telegrams to Her Majesty's Government, and expresses hope that they will make friendly representations to Cabinet of Austria, in order to prevent breaking out of an insurrection which may bring death and misery upon innocent women and children and old men, and at same time place the country in great danger.

Under the circumstances, the Imperial Government, His Majesty says, cannot help taking some measures for suppressing the insurrection and chastising its authors.

No. 133.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

(No. 238.) *Therapia, July 7, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)

SIR A. KEMBALL telegraphs following, dated Surakamish, night, Wednesday:—

"Commander-in-chief supposes Russian army is retiring demoralized to the frontier, and Caucasus in full revolt; broke up his camp near Zevin on Saturday, and marched in pursuit. We reached this Monday, halted yesterday, and to-day shall

march about seven miles to position distant about ten miles from enemy's position beyond Ardost: movement very hazardous. Left wing of Russian army is retiring in good order by cross roads from Rahat, followed, but not seriously attacked, by Turkish right wing since June 21.

"Bayazid closely invested, and supposed to be on the point of surrendering."

No. 134.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 7.)

Scutari, July 7, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

SULEIMAN PASHA having inquired this morning whether your Lordship has taken any action on my proposal of 4th instant, I told him that your Lordship had communicated with Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople. His Excellency has now led me to understand that the Porte has given him full powers, and that he believes the Porte has done this to avoid the appearance of making the first advances to Montenegro.

His Excellency added, confidentially and privately, that if any good is to come out of this affair he is the person empowered to accomplish it. In the last paragraph of telegram sent by Budua I communicated that orders have been given to the authorities in the Herzegovina to make no contracts for military supplies.

Telegraphed to Constantinople.

No. 135.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

Foreign Office, July 7, 1877, 2·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your despatch No. 188, inform naval and marine officers employed by Egyptian Government that they may retain their appointment so long as they are of a purely civil character.

No. 136.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, July 7, 1877, 2·55 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IT has been decided by the Admiralty that naval and marine officers employed by Egyptian Government may retain their appointments so long as they are of a purely civil character.

No. 137.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, July 7, 1877, 3·10 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your despatch No. 651 of the 20th ultimo, Lieutenant Layard and Major de Winton, R.A., are appointed additional Military Attachés in Turkey.

No. 138.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

Foreign Office, July 7, 1877.

(No. 404. Confidential.)

My Lord,

THE French Ambassador has informed me confidentially of the following communication which has been made to his Government by the Austrian Ambassador at Paris:—

The Italian Government, Count Wimpffen informed the Duc Decazes, had instructed their Representative at Vienna on the 20th ultimo, to inquire whether the Cabinet of Vienna did not think that the time had arrived to make a common representation at Constantinople and to take decisive action in order to save Montenegro, and by this means to protect the rights of humanity. M. Melegari proposed to address a similar inquiry to the other Powers as soon as he was assured of the adhesion of Austria.

Count Andrassy replied on July 2 by a despatch addressed to the Austrian Representative at Rome, stating that the Austrian Government felt that they could not interfere with the military operations of Turkey in Montenegro without departing from the neutral attitude which they had assumed. Any action of this kind could only serve to compromise the mediation which they might hereafter be called upon to undertake in order to secure the independence and integrity of Montenegro in view of their own interests. Count Andrassy felt, therefore, that he could not accept the invitation made by M. Melegari, and he considered that the special position of Austria gave him a right to consider that Austria should be left to take the initiative in the steps to be eventually taken in the matter, and to choose the proper time for so doing.

Count Andrassy seems to have addressed some further confidential observations to the Duc Decazes on the attitude of the Italian Government. They appeared, he said, to be much agitated by all that concerned Montenegro, and singularly active in Albania, and it was difficult to believe that all their actions were prompted by entirely disinterested feelings. Count Andrassy regrets this for the sake of Italy herself, whose unity, he thinks, could be better protected by a calmer attitude.

In making this communication, Count Wimpffen was further instructed to say that the Austrian Government would be glad to hear that that of France agreed in their view, and were ready to leave them a sort of initiative and the choice of the time when it would be expedient to express at Constantinople the interest taken by the Powers in the independence and integrity of Montenegro.

M. d'Harcourt told me that the Duc Decazes had replied in the affirmative, and had promised to instruct the French Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to come to an understanding with Count Zichy on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 139.

Lord Tenterden to Major de Winton.

Foreign Office, July 7, 1877.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that the Queen has been graciously pleased to approve of his Lordship's recommendation of you for the appointment of additional Military Attaché to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 140.

Lord Tenterden to Lieutenant Layard.

Foreign Office, July 7, 1877.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that the Queen has been graciously pleased to approve of his Lordship's recommendation of you for the appointment of additional Military Attaché to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 141.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 8.)

(No. 239.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 8, 1877, 8:30 A.M.*

KARS is relieved, and Russians were again defeated at Ipak Chadik. At Attek Kilissia, the Turks found dead bodies of Christians in the church which had been plundered by the Russians, the priest having been wounded and carried off a prisoner on account of his fidelity to the Sultan.

The Russians have attempted to cross the Danube near Silistria with two steamers and a number of boats and rafts, but were repulsed with loss. Above information from the Porte.

No. 142.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 8.)

(No. 240.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 8, 1877.*

THE Circassians stationed near Pera on their way to the war entered yesterday some shops and cafés, and quarrels ensued, without any other consequences than much alarm to the population. Porte has been urged to take steps immediately to send them away to the seat of war.

No. 143.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 8.)

(No. 241.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 8, 1877.*

IN consequence of the state of war, Porte has forbidden entrance by night into port of Smyrna to all ships of war and merchant vessels.

No. 144.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 8.)

(No. 242.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 8, 1877.*

WITH reference to your telegram of the 6th instant, I have reason to believe that the Porte would not be unwilling to come to some arrangement with Montenegro, and I do not see any objection to Mr. Green's going to Cettigné, but I cannot speak with certainty.

No. 145.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 8, at night.)

(No. 243.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 8, 1877.*

I HAVE just been informed from the Palace that, according to a telegram from the telegraph station at Grahova, the Russians have attacked the town of Selvi, to the west of Tarnova, and that they are advancing upon Grahova, which is at the foot of the Balkan Pass of Shipka.

No. 146.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 8, at night.)

(No. 244.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 8, 1877.*

PORTE has entered into a contract with an Englishman for finishing the lines at Buyuk Chekmedji within two months. Bluhm Pasha is superintending the

works of Gallipoli Peninsula, and I have sent Captain Fife to report to me on their progress.

No. 147.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 8.)

(Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, July 8, 1877.*

COLONEL WELLESLEY requests me to communicate following:—

"*Imperial Head-Quarters, Zimnicea.*

"Please send me Cypher, which is indispensable, as soon as possible. All my colleagues have one.

"My position better than ever.

"Emperor Alexander much hurt at dispatch of English fleet.

"It was at first reported fleet had been sent to Gallipoli, and he then said that such a measure was entirely at variance with the Queen's letter. Grand Duke Nicholas also begged to let my Government know impression made by the dispatch of fleet, which would only encourage Turkey and prolong war.

"I believe that Emperor intends to cross Danube, remaining with army. Infantry of Grand Ducal (*sic*) army preparing semi-circular (position ?) of no great radius, with Sistova as centre, and cavalry expeditions pushed out towards Rustchuk and Tirnova; 8th corps still on Danube; 12th on road to Tirnova; 35th division of 13th corps marching to left front; 9th corps crossing river at Zimnicea; 14th on Kustendji railway; 4th corps infantry, rifle brigade, and Bulgarian legion marching on Tirnova, preceded by four special cavalry brigades.

"So far Bulgaria abounds in supplies. Czarevitch will command army forming for siege of Rustchuk.

"Grand Duke Michael in Asia received no news from Bayazid for a week.

"Emperor told me this evening, July 6, that Russian Ambassador in London states that the dispatch of British fleet to Besica Bay is intended as a counter-demonstration to crossing of Danube by Russian troops.

"I think that assurances to the contrary would have an excellent effect here.

"Emperor also told me that he had better news about England from Berlin, which emanated from the English Ambassador just returned to his post.

"Emperor Alexander trusted Russian Ambassador was misinformed."

No. 148.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 8, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, July 8, 1877.*

ON the earnest request of Suleiman Pasha, I beg to acquaint your Lordship, at the risk of repetition, that for the last three days he has been in possession of full powers from the Porte for negotiating with Montenegro for peace or for a cessation of hostilities, and that he is most anxious that your Lordship should authorize me to see whether or not Prince Nicholas is disposed to treat with him.

His Excellency presses for an answer, as his military duties are calling him elsewhere.

If peace is not made, this withdrawal of troops from North Albania will expose the province not only to the operations of the enemy, but also to the excesses of the irregulars that have been inconsiderately collected here.

Telegraphed to Constantinople.

No. 149.

Consul Watkins to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

My Lord, *Larnaca, June 20, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that, on account of the pressing wants of the Treasury for the war, the local authorities have received instructions to

claim the sheep tax a second time, amounting to about 18,000 Turkish liras, which has only quite recently been collected.

This imposition, as may be readily supposed, has created great discontent amongst the people, who can so ill afford it, especially at this season, when the crops have turned out a complete failure.

The tax on wine has been considerably increased, and instead of the yield of 1873 being taken as the basis, as it was lately announced would be the case, that of the year 1874, which is considered as having exceeded twice the outcome of previous years, is to serve now as the basis.

The tax on convents and other religious institutions is also to be levied on erroneous valuations, which, if insisted upon, will certainly absorb the value of at least one-half of the property. The complaints of the peasants asking for a new and a just valuation of property pass unheeded. In a recent case of valuation the property was estimated at three times its value, and the peasant sent from office to office without obtaining redress.

Christian testimony is not admitted. The Christian members of the Medjliss observe that the concession is made in the Constitution, but no heed is taken of their remonstrances.

A tax of 25 per cent. is imposed upon timber instead of the former rate of 5 per cent., and the value assessed is double that of the real worth.

A tax upon charcoal is also imposed at from 8 to 12 per cent., according to the distance of the charcoal-producing districts.

Pressing orders have been received from Constantinople for the settlement of arrears remitted some time ago, and in consequence of this, the Governor has sent stringent orders to the different districts of the island. A Commission has been named to look into the arrears, and to note the names of those who are in good circumstances in order to make them pay up. The indigent will be let off.

A proposition has been made, it is said, by the people of the Kaïmakamlik of Kythrea to increase the "tithes" on all produce by one-fourth, in lieu of the "Jané-i-harbié," or contribution to the expenses of the war, and orders have been sent to the other Kaïmakamliks to collect the dimes of this year on the basis of 12½ per cent. instead of 10. The idea is said to have originated with the local Government itself. Although the majority of the peasants have really not the means to meet so many demands made upon them, they are being pressed by the authorities by all the means in their power, even to the sacrificing of their goods and furniture.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WATKINS.

No. 150.

Consul Watkins to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

Larnaca, June 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that circumstances have occurred lately in the capital of the island which tend to show the animosity still existing amongst the Turkish population towards the Christians.

A short time ago six or eight Moslem youths maliciously created an alarm amongst the Christians by raising the cry that the criminals from the State prisons had escaped.

An occurrence of this kind is always connected, in the minds of the Christians, with a general pillage and massacre, and so great was the excitement which ensued that many families removed to Larnaca, where they feel more secure, on account of the majority of the Christians and of its being a maritime town and the residence of the European Consuls, and the chief European colony in the island.

The young men in question were imprisoned for three days, when they were released on the intercession of the Greek Archbishop.

On the 16th instant the Greek Archbishop, while returning from the Medjlis, was insulted by some Turkish boys, who kept calling after him "Pis-Kiopeek," meaning dirty dog, a play on the word "Piscopos."

The Archbishop's cavass seized two of the boys and took them to the Seraglio, and the following day their fathers were arrested by orders of the Pasha.

The Archbishop is said to have complained before of improper treatment without receiving any satisfaction.

After these events, the principal Greek residents of the city waited upon the Pasha, and expressed their regret that such an indignity should have been practised upon the head of their Church, and they continued that, if now the Turks show such evident animosity towards the head of the community, what must be the ultimate fate of the other Christians in case this feeling increase.

Between the Maronite Christians of Asomatos, in the Kaïmakamlik of Kyrenia, and the Hodjah of an adjacent Turkish village, a dispute has existed for some time regarding a water-course, which dispute has more than once been settled in favour of the former village. The Hodjah lately came to Asomatos with five or six other Turks in order to pick a quarrel with the Maronites, but they had prudently retired, and the only man the Turks found was a poor shepherd, who had nothing to do with the dispute. One of the party fell upon this man with knife and cudgel and did him serious harm, in consequence of which he may possibly die. The assailant is imprisoned, but to judge from the way in which the case is being investigated, he being a Turk, will probably be admonished and released.

In a village close to the capital of the island a Turk killed a Christian, against whom he had a grudge. The Turk has been arrested.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WATKINS.

No. 151.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 52. Political.)

Aleih, June 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch and its inclosure which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting on the state of the district of Lattakia and the dismissal of the Kaïmakam of that place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 151.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Aleih, June 23, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Vitalé, reporting on the state of affairs in the district of Lattakia and the dismissal of the Kaïmakam of that place.

This measure, from what I can learn, appears to have been adopted by the Governor-General in consequence of petitions addressed to him by the family of Haroun, by the Sheikh of the dancing Dervishes and by other fanatical Mussulmans of Lattakia, and is much to be regretted, Ahmad Shukri Effendi having, during the last year, performed the duties of his office with much credit, and has succeeded in gaining the confidence and respect of the respectable portion of the inhabitants, both Christian and Mussulman.

On various occasions I have had in my despatches the honour to report very favourably on the conduct of this functionary, and his removal, together with that of Mahmoud Aga Haznadar, reported in my despatch of the 14th instant, has produced a painful impression, as showing a tendency towards retrogression on the part of the superior authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 151.

Vice-Consul Vitalé to Consul-General Eldridge.

Lattaquié, le 11 *Juin*, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que le Caïmacam de cette ville, Ahmad Chukri Effendi, est déchargé par ordre de son Excellence le Gouverneur-Général Zia Pacha, son remplaçant est un certain Mustafa Aga Karakoutli, sur le compte duquel je ne suis pas encore à même de vous soumettre aucun renseignement.

Le changement d'Ahmad Chukri Effendi a causé un vif regret parmi les Chrétiens et ceux des Musulmans de cette ville qui s'intéressent au maintien du bon ordre et de la tranquillité de la ville de Lattaquié.

Le Caïmacam de Gébélé est également changé; un certain Ahmad Boy El-Mohamad viendra, assure-t-on, le remplacer sous peu.

Sur la nouvelle que des troupes seront dirigées très prochainement contre les Montagnards Ansaryehs du Caïmacamlic de Gébélé, le brigandage, dont j'ai eu l'honneur de vous informer par mon dernier rapport, a sensiblement diminué. Malheureusement la nouvelle n'est pas vraie; au contraire, je viens d'apprendre d'une source officielle que le bataillon des troupes régulières (2e Chasseurs du 5e Corps d'Armée) qui se trouve à Tripoli, Gébélé et Lattaquié, se prépare au départ pour Constantinople.

Deux cent quatre-vingts redifs du bataillon du 3e ban de cette ville sont partis la semaine dernière pour Tripoli, afin d'y compléter un bataillon du susdit chef-lieu, et le bruit court actuellement que ce bataillon retournera ici dans quelques jours.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) N. VITALÉ.

No. 152.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 53. Political.)

Aleik, June 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch, with its inclosures, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting on the state of affairs in the district of Tripoli.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 152.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Aleik, June 23, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 12th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copies of two despatches which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Blanche, reporting on the state of affairs in the district of Tripoli, which, I regret, is still so unsatisfactory.

I greatly fear that the outrage on the monk committed by the Redifs, and reported by Mr. Blanche on the 20th instant, will be allowed to pass unpunished, as an Ottoman transport arrived on that date to embark the Redifs for Constantinople, and most probably those who so brutally ill-treated the poor monk will, in the absence of the Mutessarif, be shipped off with their comrades, in order to prevent any inquiry being made into the circumstances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 152.

Acting Vice-Consul Blanche to Consul-General Eldridge.

Tripoli, le 14 *Juin*, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

DERNIEREMENT, les Rédifs du troisième ban réunis à Tripoli sont partis précipitamment pour Lataquié, sur un ordre venu dans la nuit même. On crut dans le public à une complication alarmante des troubles Ansariés. Mais on ne tarda pas à apprendre que le bataillon de Nizams en garnison à Lataquié et à Djeblé, étant demandé à Constantinople, et que sur les réclamations des habitants et des Agents Européens, on envoyait nos Rédifs à leur place pour protéger la ville contre les attaques éventuelles des Ansariés.

Hier matin, notre Mutesarif, Chukir Bey, est lui-même parti avec le paquebot des Messageries pour Lataquié. Il compte pouvoir apaiser les troubles Ansariés plutôt par des moyens politiques que par l'usage de la force. Mais il y a toute apparence qu'il n'y réussira pas; et les forces dont il dispose sont trop insignifiantes pour qu'il puisse faire une campagne efficace. Il n'a, en effet, que ce bataillon de Rédifs parti de Tripoli, avec un effectif de 400 hommes au plus, non encore exercés; et plus de la moitié de ces hommes est composée de Musulmans et d'Ansariés des environs mêmes de Lataquié, d'où ils étaient venus par les paquebots, il y a seulement dix jours. Il a en outre une cinquantaine de dragons, ce n'est pas là une force suffisante pour remettre les Ansariés à la raison.

Depuis mes lettres du 26 Mai et du 6 Juin, la situation ne s'est pas améliorée. Le brigandage continue à Safita sur une grande échelle. Hier encore on n'apprenait que le village Maronite de Beit-el-Arkouche et un autre avaient été pillés et saccagés.

En ville, nous avons une tranquillité complète. Il n'y a guère à relever de temps en temps, que des insultes d'enfants à des Chrétiens. Mais ce n'est rien de grave. L'esprit de la population Musulmane est bon pour le moment.

Chakir Bey a laissé à sa place Derviche Effendi Chambour, l'homme le plus influent de la ville. Ce n'est pas un mauvais choix. Il donne le ton aux Tribunaux qui se comportent passablement. Malheureusement le vilayet a pris, il y a quelque temps, une mesure qui ne contribue pas à améliorer l'esprit du corps judiciaire. Il a nommé arbitrairement un Vice-Président du Tribunal Criminel, ce qui est extra-légal. Du moins, cela n'existait pas à Tripoli, ni ailleurs, d'après ce que j'entends dire. C'est un élément Musulman introduit en surplus dans les Conseils, et le choix de la personne ne semble pas avoir été très-heureux. J'entends fréquemment les Chrétiens en exprimer des plaintes et des craintes. Il serait grandement à désirer, dans l'intérêt de l'ordre, que cette superfétation inutile fût supprimée, et que la composition des Tribunaux rentrât dans ses limites règlementaires.

Je suis, &c.

(Signé) J. BLANCHE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 152.

Acting Vice-Consul Blanche to Consul-General Eldridge.

Tripoli, le 20 *Juin*, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

UN acte regrettable de brutalité Musulmane est venu troubler la tranquillité dont nous jouissions à Tripoli, et a de nouveau causé de l'inquiétude aux Chrétiens.

Dans l'après-midi de Samedi 16 courant, un moine Maronite de Marchaïa, près Beyrout, étant venu à Tripoli pour affaires, remontait de la marine en ville. Il était pris d'un accès de fièvre, et, au sortir de la marine, il s'assit à l'ombre, au bord de la route. Une femme vient à passer et l'accabla d'injures en se livrant aux intempérances habituelles contre les Chrétiens en général. Elle n'avait, paraît-il, d'autres motifs à cette sortie qu'un besoin d'épancher la mauvaise humeur que lui causait le départ des siens, emmenés comme Rédifs. Puis, avisant des soldats qui passaient, elle leur crie que le moine vient de maudire le Sultan, et faire des vœux pour le succès des Russes. Les soldats accourent au nombre de sept ou huit, s'emparent du pauvre moine grelottant de la fièvre, et l'entraînent en ville pour le mettre au sérail. Pendant tout le cours de cette longue route, ils lui font subir les traitements les plus ignominieux. Ils lui enlèvent un bâton qu'il portait et l'en frappent; ils lui crachent à la figure, lui arrachent la barbe, lui donnent des soufflets, en font l'objet de leurs

grossières bouffonneries. Un Chrétien, protégé Français, M. Alexandre Zammour, revenait justement de la marine, et il a assisté à ces honteuses scènes, depuis les premières insultes de la femme jusqu'à l'arrivée en ville. C'est de lui seul que je tiens les détails de cette sauvage agression, car le moine, toujours malade depuis, et tout étourdi par ces odieux traitements, n'a plus qu'un souvenir confus de ce qui s'est passé.

Je fis parvenir le Gérant du Moutsarrifié, qu'on ne pouvait pas fermer les yeux sur un pareil fait. Il me promit bonne justice. Mais voici aujourd'hui le cinquième jour, et rien n'a été fait contre les agresseurs. Ce sont des soldats du bataillon arrivé de Lataquié le jour même de l'événement. On attend d'un moment à l'autre le navire de guerre qui doit l'emmener. Il est manifeste que le tribunal traîne l'affaire jusqu'au moment de l'embarquement, espérant ainsi se soustraire à l'obligation de sévir contre les soldats coupables. Il est très-regrettable que dans les circonstances présentes, un pareil fait reste sans répression par la faute de l'autorité. C'est elle qui porte la responsabilité de ce désir de justice; et j'engage le moine à aller demander ailleurs la satisfaction qui lui est due.

J'ose vous prier, M. le Consul-Général, de prêter à sa cause votre bienveillant appui, en informant son Excellence le Vali de ce qui s'est passé.

Je suis, &c.
(Signé) J. BLANCHE.

P.S.—Les nouvelles de Safita sont toujours mauvaises. Je viens à l'instant de recevoir l'avis que le 3 Juin une nombreuse bande d'Ansariehs est venue piller le village Maronite de Mechta. Deux jours après, le Mardi 5 Juin, elle a tombée sur un autre village appelé Btar, et en ont assommé le prêtre, qui se trouve, dit-on, en danger de mort.

On signale le nommé Ali Kaïré, comme le principal auteur de ces récentes agressions, et aussi un frère de Haouache Bey. Je crois du reste que ces deux attaques sont les mêmes que celles que je vous ai signalés dans mon rapport du 14 courant (par la poste Turque), sur une première information encore vague. Car je vous ai parlé d'un village de Beit-Arkouche. J'apprends aujourd'hui que c'est le nom de la première famille du Muchia Maronite. On me donne comme certain qu'à Btar un Chrétien a été pendu par les Ansariés.

J. B.

No. 153.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 9.*)

(No. 54. Political.)
Aleih, June 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting the removal of Zia Pasha from the Vilayet of Syria to that of Koniah and the appointment of Omer Fevzi Pasha as Wali of Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 153.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Aleih, June 23, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 12th ultimo, reporting on the incapacity, as an Administrator, of Zia Pasha, the Governor-General of Syria, I have the honour to report that his Excellency received last week an official telegram informing him that he had been transferred to Koniah, and ordering him to give up the charge of the vilayet to the Mushir and to quit Damascus at once; and he accordingly arrived on the 17th instant at Beyrout, whence he will start viâ Mersina, by the French steamer of the 26th instant for his new post, where, I trust, for the sake of his country, that he will display more activity than he has done in Syria, where his removal has given universal satisfaction to all classes of the population.

Omer Fevzi Pasha, the Wali of Koniah, has been appointed successor to Zia Pasha, and all hope that his rule will produce more satisfactory results than that of his predecessor, whose unpopularity exceeds anything I have met with in Turkey during the course of my somewhat long experience.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 154.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 9.*)

(No. 265. Confidential.)
Siena, June 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I went to Rome the day before yesterday, and that I had an interview with M. Melegari yesterday morning.

After some general observations, the conversation turned upon the correspondence recently published between your Lordship and Prince Gortchakow.

Without committing himself to the expression of any absolute opinion, M. Melegari appeared to me to be but moderately reassured as to the ultimate views of Russia. His Excellency's trust is that it may be possible to make peace before the Russian army crosses the Balkan. He considers the declaration that the acquisition of Constantinople is excluded from the views of the Emperor, and that this town is not to belong to any of the European Powers, as so far satisfactory; but, in answer to an observation which I made, his Excellency admitted that it would be dangerous to trust too implicitly to such a declaration, for that, whatever might be the intentions of Russia before entering the Turkish capital as to not permanently retaining it, it would be almost beyond the power of the Emperor and his Government to give it up if once it fell into the hands of the Russian army.

In regard to the navigation of the Straits and Bosphorus, his Excellency stated that he was as much opposed as ever to any change in the existing arrangements, which forbids their navigation by ships-of-war in time of peace, and in reply to an inquiry I addressed to him, his Excellency stated that the Italian Government would be ready to join Her Majesty's Government in making a stand against the adoption of any change.

His Excellency told me that he had not received any intelligence respecting the conditions of peace which Russia intended to exact.

His reports from Vienna gave him confidence, he said, in the desire of Austria-Hungary to avoid, if possible, adding to present complications by occupying any of the neighbouring provinces or otherwise, and he had read with great satisfaction the recent declarations on this subject by the Minister-President Tisza, and the President of the Austrian Cabinet, Prince Auersperg.

On leaving M. Melegari I went to Count Tornielli, who held language similar to that of his chief. Count Tornielli adheres to his previous opinion, reported in my despatch No. 235, Confidential, of the 6th instant, that an effort should have been made to secure peace before the Russians had passed the Danube, and he expressed his conviction that the terms which Russia would now require would be much harder than might have been obtained before.

In reference to Prince Gortchakow's answer to your Lordship, Count Tornielli observed that it was only positive on two points, Egypt and the Canal, which were tolerably safe without any assurances.

From Count Tornielli I went to the President of the Council, Signor Depretis, and after speaking to his Excellency on the commercial business, which was the special object of my visit, we conversed on the all-absorbing question of the day.

I found his Excellency much more decidedly mistrustful of Russia than his colleague of the Foreign Office. His Excellency feared there was little doubt that the intention of Russia was that Constantinople should be taken by the Russian army, and if that happened he did not believe it would ever be abandoned; he was at a loss to understand Prince Gortchakow's meaning when he said that Constantinople was not to belong to any of the European Powers, for Turkey itself was a European Power. Was Prince Gortchakow's phrase to be taken as intended to apply to Turkey as well as the other Powers? In any case, he could not admit the possibility of Europe allowing Constantinople to fall into the hands of Russia. The Emperor and his Government, his Excellency continued, must be perfectly aware that Europe could never sanction

such an arrangement, and the feeling which he had that they must be convinced of this, afforded to him (Signor Depretis) the principal grounds for hoping that Russia would not push her victories beyond the Balkans, and that the war might, therefore, continue to preserve its local character.

As regards the navigation of the Straits, Signor Depretis declared most emphatically that he should consider any change in the existing arrangements as prejudicial to the interests of Italy, which he held to be identical in this question, as well as in others affecting the balance of power in the Mediterranean, with those of Great Britain; and, his Excellency added, he was glad to think that such was the case, for it afforded one of the greatest securities for Italy.

After reporting this language, I feel that the question may not unnaturally be asked, whether I think that, in the event of the case occurring, Italy might be relied upon for co-operating with England otherwise than diplomatically,—but I feel bound to be very cautious in making any affirmation on the subject.

It is not that I have any doubt as to the sincerity with which the Italian Ministers express themselves; but in the first place, the feeling on the part of the Ministers and throughout the country in favour of peace is so very strong, its necessity for the country is so great, that I believe it would require the very clearest evidence that the paramount interests of the nation were at stake in order to overcome it. Nor would this be the only motive for hesitation; for, however great may be the interest of Italy in the settlement of the Eastern question, there is another of still greater interest to her, which, when it comes to the point of taking a decision, must always be an element for serious consideration on the part of any Italian Ministry, viz., the attitude of some of the Continental Powers, especially France and Germany; for, although I see no reason to distrust the belief which I have always, and again recently, expressed, that there is no secret alliance or engagement between the latter Power and Italy, it is certainly not at a moment when what may be the future policy of the former Power towards Italy is shrouded in so much mystery that the Italian Government would be inclined to offend the only Continental State to whom she might look for support, in the event of Italy being attacked by France.

Italy will, I believe, endeavour to remain neutral as long as she can; but, nevertheless, there are circumstances in which her active co-operation with England, I think, may be possible; there are none in which I can conceive her taking up arms to oppose us.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 155.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 267. Very Confidential.)
Siena, July 2, 1877.

My Lord,

DURING a visit I paid to my Austro-Hungarian colleague whilst I was in Rome last week, his Excellency informed me confidentially that at the moment of the reported Turkish successes against Montenegro, and when the Turkish troops were said to be marching on Cettigné, M. Melegari had asked him, and had repeated the question through the Italian Ambassador at Vienna, whether the Austro-Hungarian Government would not be disposed to join the Italian Government in interceding with the Turkish Government in favour of Montenegro and Prince Nicholas.

Baron Haymerle told me that the reply of his Government had been 1st, that they did not believe Prince Nicholas and his capital to be in such imminent danger as was represented, and 2nd, that such a communication as that proposed could not be made unless the two Governments were prepared to support it by force of arms—a course which, as the Italian Government seemed particularly apprehensive lest some of the neighbouring Turkish provinces should be occupied by Austrian troops, the Austro-Hungarian Cabinet were of opinion would be hardly agreeable to Italy, and which they moreover thought would hardly commend itself to adoption by the Italian Government.

I asked Baron Haymerle how he accounted for this somewhat sudden burst of sympathy for the Montenegrins on the part of M. Melegari.

His Excellency replied that the only way he could account for it was by supposing

that, as the Italian Government had been somewhat taunted in the Chamber for their neglect of the Christians of Turkey, they wished to have it in their power to say, in reply to similar accusations, that they had offered to intercede in favour of Montenegro when it was hard pressed.

In the interview which I had with M. Melegari in the morning before seeing Baron Haymerle, I asked his Excellency casually whether he had any news from Montenegro, when he read me a telegram from M. Durando of the day before, saying that there was nothing to fear for Prince Nicholas, that the reported march of the Turks on Cettigné was premature, and that according to the latest intelligence, the Turkish army was withdrawing in the direction of Podgoritza. This telegram, his Excellency told me, was in reply to one he had sent to M. Durando, but he did not mention any of the details given me by the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 156.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 362.)
St. Petersburgh, July 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship the translation of an article from the "Golos" of this morning, translated from the Russian by Mr. Egerton, referring to an article of the "Daily Telegraph" of the 26th June, in which mention is made of a telegram from Vienna giving certain conditions on which Russia is reported to be ready to conclude peace with Turkey.

Although this article bears no official character, still it may be taken as a fair exposition of public opinion in Russia as to the future conditions of peace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 156.

Extract from the "Golos" of July 2, 1877.

(Translation.)

IN the "Daily Telegraph" of June 26th, received here to-day, there is a telegram from Vienna, which gives, "from reliable sources," the three points of the conditions on which Russia would be ready even now to conclude peace with Turkey.

These points are the following:—

1. The cession to Russia of Batoum and the district surrounding it.
2. The independence of Bulgaria north of the Balkans.
3. The free passage of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus for Russian men-of-war.

The "Daily Telegraph" devotes to this sensational news a whole leading article, full of exclamations against the immeasurableness of the pretensions of Russia, and of the impossibility for England to allow Turkey to grant such concessions.

All this flame is kindled in vain by the London Turcophile journal. Whatever the "reliable sources" from which it received its Vienna telegram, it may be safely affirmed that the news contained therein is nothing more than one of those mystifications which afford busy occupation to a certain clique of pseudo-diplomatists at Vienna which gives itself out in the English papers as the receptacle of the most hidden secrets of European diplomacy.

We do not speak on the authority of any important "information" in our possession, but merely because the points in question, though very alarming to the "Daily Telegraph," are by no means such as Russia will accept as sufficient indemnification for all the sacrifices already made in the great and holy task of freeing the Balkan Christians from the Mussulman yoke.

In the first place, Russia cannot content herself with Batoum and the districts belonging to it, in the case of territorial indemnities being claimed for the expenses of the war. The "scrap" of land in question in no case will be considered a sufficient exchange for the money indemnity which it would be fruitless to hope to exact from the Porte, as she would nowhere find means for its payment. The cessions of territory made in lieu of money indemnities should at least be their equal in value. This everybody knows, however little acquainted with the inner history of the peace

negotiations which have taken place at the end of all the European wars of this century.

As regards the independence of Bulgaria north of the Balkans, this point both exceeds and falls short of the programme of the Russian Government. Hitherto, there has not been a question of the making of Bulgaria into an independent kingdom. At the same time, the very motive of the Russian action in favour of the Bulgarians excludes the possibility of separating from their country those very districts in which the horrors, at which all Europe shuddered, were perpetrated by the Turks; and those districts are south of the Balkan range. Batak, Tatar-Bazardjik, and other Bulgarian settlements, stained purple by the blood of their martyred inhabitants, cannot be divided from Northern Bulgaria, and cannot certainly be excluded from the position which Russia is anxiously striving to obtain, both for the Bulgarian people and for the other Christian inhabitants of Turkey.

As regards the free navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, this condition will form part of any proposals for peace by Russia; not, indeed, as one of the most important conditions of such proposals, but as a necessary, natural, and unavoidable result of the consent of Russia to cease warlike action.

Indeed, all this talk of the conditions of peace is very premature. With all its readiness to finish its task by peace, in its proper time, Russia cannot tie her freedom of action by the communication to others of the programme of the cessions by which the Porte may arrest the movement of the Russian soldiers who have crossed the Danube. Not at a moment when Russian blood flows in Bulgaria, and when our army, inflamed with the ardent wish to free the Turkish Christians, strives forward with the heroic adventure of those warring for a righteous and holy cause, will we inform the European Cabinets, and through them the Porte, of the utmost limit of our demands and the nature of our plans. Everything in its own due time. At the present moment the cannon and bayonet have the first word, and they will finally decide what we are to exact from the Porte, and on what conditions we may consent to enter into negotiations with her for peace.

No. 157.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 370.) *St. Petersburgh, July 4, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to Sir Augustus Paget's despatch No. 252 of the 18th ultimo, copy of which was inclosed to me in your Lordship's No. 264 of the 27th ultimo, I inquired to-day from M. de Giers as to the truth of certain proposals said to have been made by the Russian Government to the Papal Government for the improvement of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland.

His Excellency replied that there were no negotiations with the Papal Government on this subject, and no truth in the reported proposals of the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 158.

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 36. Political.) *Odessa, July 3, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch to me, Confidential, with inclosure from Mr. Vice-Consul Moffat, showing the distribution of the 10th corps in the Crimea and neighbourhood.

I have not received Mr. Moffat's despatch No. 11.

The Russian Government have begun the construction of a railway from Bender to Galatz.

I do not know the exact direction it will take, but I believe it will pass by Ismail.

The contract has been given to MM. Varshafsky and Poliakoff, well-known Jew

railway contractors, at 80,000 roubles a verst, paper money, or 65,000 roubles metallic.

It is to be finished, less the stations, in four months.

Your Lordship will appreciate the importance of this undertaking, not only for the strategic value of the line, but as indicating the future intentions of the Government regarding the district it will traverse.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

P.S.—Ten Turkish steamers in two columns were visible the day before yesterday. They steamed away in the direction of Sevastopol.

G. E. S.

No. 159.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 85. Political.) *Belgrade, July 4, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the accompanying English translation of the speech delivered by the Prince of Servia, in the native language of the country, at Kragouievatz, on the 2nd instant, on the occasion of the opening of the ordinary session of the National Assembly or Skoupstchina.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 159.

Speech of the Prince of Serbia on opening the ordinary Session of the National Assembly (Skoupstchina), at Kragouiévatz, July 2, 1877.

(Translation.)

Honourable Deputies!

SINCE we last met important historical events have taken place in our country; if I allude to them after the meeting of the Grand Assembly it is only for the purpose of testifying in your presence to the efforts it has cost Servia to fulfil her national mission. During more than eight months we have had to bear all the burdens of war, and during four months we have fought the best troops, both regulars and irregulars, of a vast Empire.

We not only had to bear the brunt of the enemy's attacks on an extensive line of open country, but we had likewise to defend our hearths against devastation. During this whole time the Serbian people gave abundant proofs of perseverance and self-denial of which it may be justly proud, and of which it is my duty to speak here with gratitude.

History takes only into account a collection of facts and the natural link between them; history will no doubt appreciate properly our struggle, and extend to Servia a due meed of praise.

We may look back with equal satisfaction on the results which are sure to be brought forward by the blood which we have shed; these don't follow generally at once, but our blood has not been shed in vain either for the Christians of the East or for humanity or for the future of the Serbian people.

When, agreeably to the advice of the Great Assembly, I concluded peace with the Ottoman Porte, I stated in my Proclamation that the interests of the Eastern Christians were committed to stronger hands than mine, and that, therefore, we could put an end to the war without injuring in any way the sacred cause for which we had commenced it.

Events came soon to confirm my assertions, the Czar, the "Liberator," has unfurled his victorious banner in our vicinity.

The arrival of His Imperial Majesty has afforded me a long-desired opportunity to express in my own name and on behalf of my nation our deep sentiments of gratitude for the powerful protection bestowed upon our country during the whole of the past year.

As I fulfilled this duty with deep feelings of gratitude so I am happy to be

able to announce to you that the magnanimous Sovereign was not only pleased to accept the expression of my sentiments with His Majesty's innate graciousness, but was likewise pleased to give me assurances of the paternal care which he continues to entertain for Servia and the Servian nation.

All these circumstances are so satisfactory that we may quietly devote ourselves to the works of legislation for which I have called you together. Among these financial projets will require your early attention as the natural result of the events which I have spoken about.

Gentlemen,—Although Servia is in enjoyment of full peace at present, the events passing in our neighbourhood are of such importance that in the interest of our country we are bound to be extremely prudent. Any unwise step might prove injurious to the fine prospect before us; you have given so many proofs of your perspicacity and patriotism, that I rely with confidence on your support; trusting that, by co-operation with my Government, you will maintain Servia in that high moral position which she has attained by great sacrifices. It is only by acting thus that you will secure the thanks of the present and future generations for having inaugurated with courage and closed with firmness the most important period of our modern history.

I am happy to be able to announce to you that Providence has bestowed upon me a son and heir Alexander, and a future Ruler for Servia. Born in the midst of important events he will learn to continue the hereditary mission of his ancestors. It will be my object to instil into him from his earliest years that love for the nation which has characterized the dynasty of Obrenovitch from the memorable day of Takovo to the most difficult times.

No. 160.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, July 9.)

(No. 68.)

Buda-Pest, July 4, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that, in concert with the Austrian Ministry, the Hungarian Minister of Finance has, on the 2nd instant, extended to the Save and Customs frontier of the kingdom the prohibition of the export of horses of the 21st of November last.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 161.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 11. Political. Confidential.)

Corfu, July 5, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE learnt with unmixed pleasure that your Lordship contemplates appointing a Consular Officer to a port on the coast of Upper Albania.

Owing to the suppression, in recent times, of so many Consular Agencies in that part of Turkey, British prestige, in bygone years supreme, is now well nigh annihilated.

At present, Russians and Italians, actuated by motives of individual ambition, are bidding high with the object of acquiring the moral influence over the population of Upper and Lower Albania which we have lost and which was never exerted but for the good of the people themselves.

Italian agency is being actively exerted among the Mirdites and among the Catholic population lower down—particularly in the neighbourhood of Durazzo, where the Roman Catholics muster strong. Corfu is the centre of the movement in this sense.

I regret to have to report that the activity of the revolutionary Heteria here, under Russian influence, is being redoubled. Money has recently been sent to gain over the Chimariots; but with what success I am not, as yet, informed.

Arms and gunpowder are being constantly smuggled across to Albania from hence.

And as all the Turkish cruizers along the coast have latterly been withdrawn there is no check whatever on this dangerous traffic.

Abdi Teherkoss Pasha, whose appointment to the chief military command in Epirus I reported in my communication of the 26th ultimo (Political, No. 9), has just been appointed Vali, so that the civil and military authority is concentrated in his hands. One of his first acts has been to displace the Pasha in command at Argirocastro, whose district had become a stronghold of brigands.

Abdi is an old acquaintance of mine. In 1854, while on his way to Constantinople, after the final defeat of the Greek raiders under Grivas and Tsavella at the battle of Peta, he spent a week with me at St. Maura. During his stay in the island, he made himself popular among the natives by his liberality to the poor and his winning manners. He is a thorough soldier, and if military talent, courage, and a humane policy may avail to keep the peace in Epirus, he is the man to do it.

But with so many sinister agencies at work, it is impossible to remain blind to the conclusion, that, should Suleiman Pasha not succeed in putting down the Montenegrins very shortly, and should the Russians be able to force their way across the Balkans, we may expect to see Macedonia, Thessaly, and Epirus in a blaze, the Greeks, in spite of the best meant efforts of their Government to restrain them, helping on the conflagration.

With, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

No. 162.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 275. Confidential.)

Berlin, July 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to advise your Lordship this day, by telegraph, that Prince Bismarck had expressed the opinion that, at this moment, he sees no cause for the general alarm felt in Germany with regard to the crisis in France, and that his Highness had noticed with regret the over-zealous and violent attacks made upon that country by the German press.

It is natural to infer therefrom that this Government will, for the present, whilst watching closely the electoral movement, direct the newspapers to moderate their tone.

The Chancellor, however, appeared less pleased with the aspect of affairs in Turkey.

His Highness expressed anxiety at the fresh complications which appear to beset the Eastern question, and seemed desirous, in concert with Her Majesty's Government, to guard against their acquiring more serious proportions.

Prince Bismarck is most desirous to see Lord Odo Russell, who is expected to return to Berlin this evening.

The above information was derived from a most reliable source.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 163.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 280. Secret.)

Berlin, July 6, 1877.

My Lord,

IN obedience to your Lordship's verbal instructions to me on the 26th ultimo, I asked Prince Bismarck to-day what he thought of the Russian peace proposals, communicated confidentially by Count Schouvaloff to your Lordship on the 8th ultimo.

Prince Bismarck replied that he would approve any terms of peace on which England and Russia, as well as Austria were agreed, but that he was afraid that Turkey was not yet willing to listen to reason.

He would exert all the influence he possessed to facilitate an amicable agreement between England and Russia, and he believed the Russian peace proposals to be

perfectly sincere; but until he knew how they were viewed by Her Majesty's Government, he could do nothing towards bringing about an agreement.

If, therefore, Her Majesty's Government would answer the Russian communication in detail, and state their wishes, he would gladly give them his best support in the interest of peace.

I said that in the last conversation I had had with the Earl of Beaconsfield on the 26th ultimo, his Lordship had requested me to point out confidentially to his Highness that two of the most important questions for England were those concerning Constantinople and the navigation of the Straits, and that Her Majesty's Government reckoned on the support of Germany in maintaining the sovereignty of the Sultan at Constantinople, and the principles which regulated the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles.

The Premier, I said, was prepared to advise Her Majesty the Queen to send the fleet to Gallipoli, not necessarily to encourage or to coerce the belligerents, but to be present on the spot and ready to guard and maintain the interests of England when the day of settlement was at hand.

Prince Bismarck replied that such a measure would greatly facilitate peace later on, when the belligerents were exhausted and ready to treat; but at present, and as matters now stood, he thought it might encourage the resistance of Turkey, and prolong the war.

Turkey was not yet beaten, and Russia, flushed with the success of her passage of the Danube, would not be satisfied without a victory. Until then he looked upon all attempts at a pacification as hopeless.

He now agreed with Austria in thinking that Russia and Turkey must fight out their quarrel before the Powers could successfully concert a settlement of the Turkish question. He believed the assurances given by the Czar to Her Majesty's Government, and to his uncle, the German Emperor, that Russia would not take possession of Constantinople, and he looked upon the peace proposals, submitted by Count Schouvaloff to your Lordship on the 8th June, as the sincere expression of the wishes and intentions of the Russian Government.

He felt sure that any counter propositions Her Majesty's Government had to make would be favourably met by Russia, whose anxious desire it was to keep on terms of friendship with England; and if Her Majesty's Government would communicate such counter propositions to him, he would give them all the support in his power, and he could do so with the more effect since Germany wanted nothing for herself but peace, and the maintenance of the European concert.

He considered the promise of the Czar not to take possession of Constantinople as a solemn engagement contracted with the Guaranteeing Powers, and he thought the navigation of the Straits could only be regulated by them, and not by Russia and Turkey alone.

He hoped Her Majesty's Government would answer the Russian communication and "take act" officially of the proposals they would consent to, and would state what changes they were not prepared to sanction, so that a clear basis could be established on which to negotiate a lasting European agreement and a permanent, sound, and satisfactory settlement of the Turkish question. Germany had no other interest in the matter but peace, and was otherwise absolutely disinterested in the mode of settlement, and he took this opportunity of protesting against the insinuations of his enemies that he wanted to annex Holland or Bohemia, or any other portion of Europe to the German Empire.

On the other hand, if the interests of great nations required the annexation of territory, he was the first to approve; and he had therefore heard with surprise from Count Münster that Her Majesty's Government were averse to taking possession of the road to India through Egypt, which, in the interest of Great Britain and of the commercial world, should, in his opinion, be now transferred from the suzerainty of the Sultan of Turkey to that of the Empress of India.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 164.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 9.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 8 Juillet*, 1877.

NOS autorités nous signalent des actes de la plus haute gravité commis par les troupes Russes sur les points de notre territoire qui ont été envahis, et il résulte de ces actes que l'ennemi procède systématiquement par le massacre, le pillage, et l'incendie.

Parmi ces actes, les autorités Impériales nous signalent les suivants dont la réalité est absolument établie.

Les troupes Russes ont envahi Mercredi dernier un village Musulman dépendant de Sistow, l'ont mis à sac, et ont incendié les habitations et massacré un grand nombre de personnes paisibles. Six habitants du même village, ayant été rencontrés par l'ennemi, ont été attaqués. Bien qu'ils ne fissent aucune résistance, l'un d'eux a été tué et les autres ont été faits prisonniers. Sept autres personnes se rendant de Roustchouk à Pitona, leur pays natal, ont été égorgées par la cavalerie Russe. Un seul échappa au massacre. Les cadavres des malheureuses victimes ont été l'objet d'horribles profanations; on leur a arraché les yeux et bouché les orbites avec du pain. Les Bulgares de Sistow, excités par la présence de l'ennemi, massacrent les Musulmans fugitifs; et huit soldats Turcs, tombés entre les mains des Russes, ont été assommés à coups de bâton.

Les mêmes atrocités nous sont signalées en Asie, notamment les suivantes:—1,500 familles de Soukoum-Kalé s'étant réfugiées dans les forêts pour échapper au traitement barbare que les Cosaques font subir à toute la population Musulmane, sont mortes d'inanition. La division Russe qui occupait Ardanache, dans sa retraite vers la frontière, a mis à mort cinquante personnes de tout sexe et de tout âge et incendié les habitations de plusieurs villages qu'elle traversait. L'Evêque Arménien des Uteh Kilissé a été saisi, brutalement garrotté et emmené par les troupes dans cet affreux état.

Ces faits dont tout commentaire affaiblirait l'horreur et que je vous prie de signaler à la conscience publique se généralisent sur tout le passage des troupes Russes tant en Europe qu'en Asie, et ne laissent aucun doute sur le programme de meurtre et de dévastation adopté par l'ennemi pour terroriser le pays et exterminer la population non-combattante.

No. 165.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 245. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 8*, 1877.

THE Sultan has sent to ask me whether he can look to England for help in any way, or whether he is to be abandoned altogether, as it is now time for England to decide. I answered that I could not say anything which might lead him to hope for assistance.

He is evidently in great fear and distress. He has given orders to Commander-in-chief in Bulgaria to make an attempt at once to check Russian advance on Grahova, and Raouf Pasha, the Minister of Marine, will leave immediately to direct defence of the Balkan passes, to which all disposable troops are being hurried.

The situation is undoubtedly critical.

I am assured that serious apprehensions may be entertained of Mussulmans turning upon Christians, especially when outrages alleged to be perpetrated by Russians on Mahommedan populations become generally known.

This is confirmed to me by head of the Secret Police, but I see no symptoms of it here as yet.

No. 166.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.

Foreign Office, July 9, 1877, 3·10 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
YOU may go to Cettigné, as proposed in your telegram.

No. 167.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, July 9, 1877, 4·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)
MR. KIRBY GREEN has been authorized to go to Cettigné; you should inform the Porte.

No. 168.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 238.) *Foreign Office, July 9, 1877.*

Sir,

MR. LAYARD telegraphed on the 7th instant, as you are aware, that the Sultan had sent to him copies of telegrams from the Governor of Bosnia, in which it was stated that the Austrian military authorities had allowed bands of insurgents to assemble on the Turkish frontier of Dalmatia, with the object of attacking Turkish villages; that these bands, who were expected to cross immediately, were well armed, and were assisted and encouraged by the Austrian military authorities, who promised them help in case of resistance, and whose object clearly was to bring in a case for war between Austria and Turkey. The Sultan was stated to have expressed the hope that Her Majesty's Government would make friendly representations to that of Austria, in order to prevent insurrections from breaking out, which would bring death and misery upon old men, women, and children, and would place the country in great danger. It was the Sultan's opinion, as recorded by Mr. Layard, that the Austrian Government could not help taking some measures for suppressing the insurrection and chastising the leaders by whom it had been fomented.

I communicated to-day to Count Beust the general purport of this telegram; and I added that, while not doubting the sincerity of his Government, and not vouching for the statements contained in the telegrams as being absolutely accurate, I knew that the Austrian officials in Dalmatia had strong Slavonic sympathies, and I consequently thought it not unlikely that they might have taken the opportunity, presented by the assembly of the bands of insurgents, of showing these sympathies in a way which would not be approved by the Government at Vienna.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 169.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 291.) *Foreign Office, July 9, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE to state to your Excellency that, as it appears that Suleiman Pasha is furnished with full powers from the Porte to negotiate with Montenegro, I have authorized Mr. Kirby Green to proceed to Cettigné, in order to ascertain whether the Prince of Montenegro is disposed to treat for peace.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 170.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.

(No. 22.) *Foreign Office, July 9, 1877.*

Sir,

WITH reference to your telegram of the 8th instant, stating that Suleiman Pasha is in the possession of full powers from the Porte empowering him to come to some arrangement with Montenegro, I authorize you to proceed to Cettigné, as suggested in your telegram, with a view to ascertain whether the Prince of Montenegro is disposed to treat for peace.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 171.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 93.) *Tiflis, June 10, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that troops are being continually landed at Soukum Kalé by the Turks, and that the whole of the country between the River Kodor and Adler is in their possession.

The Russians were defeated on the 3rd instant on the banks of the Kodor, with the loss of from 1,500 to 2,000 men. Official reports, however, mention but 13 killed and 24 wounded. General Krachenkoff, of Soukum, has been disgraced, and General Tchernaieff is said to have had a command given him of the army near Soukum.

The landing at Soukum has had the effect of forcing the Russians to withdraw some of their troops from the side of Ozurget. Nothing of any importance has lately been reported as regards the operations near Batoum, nor is that place, as far as one hears, likely at present to fall into their hands. Some deserters from the Tchechentz Militia have been brought in arrest to Tiflis, and the chief portion of the Mussulman Militia have either deserted or gone over to the Turks.

The Georgian Militia has suffered very severely in the actions near Ozurget and Soukum, and the Russian Government, being short of troops, has issued orders that each family should at its own expense furnish one man and one horse for service against the Turks. The expense of the maintenance of the militiamen thus raised has also to be defrayed by the villages to which they belong. This measure being contrary to law, has created, I need hardly observe, great discontent among the Georgian and Imeritian inhabitants.

The revolution in the Caucasus still continues, and it is no sooner put down in one place than it breaks out in another. It occupies apparently at present the attention of some 30,000 Russian troops.

Relative to the taking of Ardahan, I find the following in a letter published in one of the local papers:—

"It is a fact that our troops, without any impediment from the enemy, were able to place all their batteries;" also, "The Turks let our column pass near their forts without firing or taking any notice of them."

Despatch No. 92, on the atrocities committed at Ardahan, was sent by post on the 10th instant.

The Liva (Brigadier-General) Ali Pasha and some 83 Turks are prisoners at Tiflis. Grand Duke is at Kars. Prince Mirsky is at Tiflis, and will remain here about ten days. A French General of Artillery named De Courcy has gone to the Russian camp at Kars. Mr. G. Forbes, correspondent for the "Times," has been permitted to accompany the Russian army.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

No. 172.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 61. Political.)

Bosna-Serai, June 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the Governor-General has lately been urging the Greek Archbishop and the Catholic curate of Serajevo to induce the Christians of this province to volunteer for military service. I am told, however, that in this respect they are not likely to have much influence over their flocks, and it is said that a few days ago an Orthodox peasant presented himself before the Archbishop on the part of his co-religionists, and warned him against accepting any proposal from the Government requiring military service from the Christians. The Archbishop endeavoured to remonstrate, and said it was the Christian's duty, as much as the Mussulman's, to fight in defence of their country and their homes; but the peasant answered that they had neither country, nor homes, nor honour to defend; they had but their lives, and they would not sacrifice them lightly. The wealthier townspeople also declare they will sooner pay any amount of war-tax than allow their sons to accept military service, and I hear that several respectable young men of this town have already quitted the country, fearing they may be called upon to serve.

In time of peace the Christians might, I think, gradually be brought to consent to serve in the army, and it is probably the only measure likely to put an end to the inequality of Mussulman and Christian, but this is hardly an opportune moment to introduce such an innovation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 173.

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 37. Political.)

Odessa, July 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to state that the protest of the Ottoman Government, as reported in the "Times" of the 28th ultimo, against the alleged action of Russian war-ships in blowing up several Ottoman merchantmen with their crews, is based on incorrect information as to the facts, which were, as I reported in my despatch No. 31, Political, with the omission that the crews, except one man who was found at the last on board, and was taken to Sebastopol, were landed on the Anatolian coast.

The crew of the brig "Aslar Aslan Bakhri" was, as I stated in my despatch No. 55, Consular, sent to Constantinople that day on the Ottoman schooner "Murad Bakhri."

The master of the "Aslan Bakhri" told me, in explanation of such a small ship having such a large crew, that he frequently traded to places on the coast where labourers were not procurable.

He was much surprised at being captured, having been told that the first Russian ship he might meet would notify to him that he would be liable to capture if met a second time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

No. 174.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 10.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 9 Juillet, 1877.

DURANT un engagement qui a eu lieu à Tchamtchara en Asie, les troupes Russes ont dirigé leur feu sur l'hôpital, bien qu'il fût surmonté du pavillon de neutralisation, c'est-à-dire du Croissant Rouge sur fond blanc. L'hôpital contenait des blessés dont plusieurs, empêchés par leur état de prendre la fuite, ont été tués. Nous signalons à l'indignation de l'Europe entière cet acte cruel, qui est non-seulement

contraire à l'humanité, mais encore une atteinte aux obligations imposées à tous les signataires de la Convention de Genève.

La Sublime Porte proteste énergiquement contre cette violation des lois de l'humanité et des Conventions internationales.

No. 175.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 10.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 9 Juillet, 1877.

L'AGENT de Servie vient de me donner communication d'un télégramme par lequel M. Ristitch, en l'informant que les troupes Impériales se concentrent et prennent position autour de Nich, tout près de la frontière, sans prétexte ni provocation aucune, le charge de nous demander des explications à cet égard, et de prier la Sublime Porte d'ordonner que l'armée se retire un peu plus dans l'intérieur, les populations Serbes des confins en étant très-alarmées et croyant à une invasion de notre part.

Nous avons répondu à M. Ristitch que la Sublime Porte, rassurée par les déclarations réitérées du Gouvernement Servien sur ses sentiments pacifiques, ne peut avoir aucunement l'intention d'envahir la Principauté; que les troupes Impériales qui se trouvent à Nich ont l'ordre de se tenir strictement sur la défensive en attendant le cours des événements, et en prévision de toute éventualité, et qu'elles ont pour mission de veiller au maintien de l'ordre et de la tranquillité. Nous avons ajouté que la Servie ne devait concevoir aucune inquiétude à cet égard, et qu'en nous demandant de nouvelles explications alors que nous lui avons déjà donné les assurances les plus formelles, elle nous oblige à porter notre souvenir vers l'époque néfaste où, pour justifier sa détermination de nous déclarer la guerre, elle se plaignait amèrement de la concentration de troupes Ottomanes près de la ligne de démarcation.

Nous espérons qu'il n'en sera pas de même cette fois-ci.

J'ai cru devoir vous télégraphier ce qui précède pour que vous y conformiez votre langage dans le cas où le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères vous interpellerait à ce sujet.

No. 176.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 10.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Vienna, July 9, 1877.

I AM assured by Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that no such bands can exist on the Austrian frontier as those referred to by Mr. Layard's telegram forwarded to me on Saturday. It is possible, however, he says, that bands of insurgents, occupying the strip of territory between Unna and the Austrian frontier may be supposed by Turkish authorities to be on Austro-Hungarian territory. He states also that the troops in Bosnia, being now all concentrated in towns, insurgent marauders are able to go wherever they choose, pillaging both Mahommedan and Christian population. Besides, there is a mountain range of considerable extent, which no Turkish military or police forces have crossed during last year, and in which, consequently, the insurgents are in entire safety.

No. 177.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 10.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburgh, July 9, 1877.

OFFICIAL telegram reports defeat yesterday by General Gourka with cavalry force and one battery of horse artillery of 3,000 Turkish troops at Tirnova, capturing camp, ammunition, wagons, and train. Turks retired on Osman Bazar. Russian infantry and cavalry are marching on Tirnova.

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* Repeated to Constantinople.

No. 178.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 10.)

(No. 246.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 9, 1877.

I AM informed that the Russians have occupied Tirnova, Plewna, and Selvi, in Bulgaria, without resistance.

No. 179.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 10.)

(No. 248.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 10, 1877.

FOLLOWING from Consul at Erzeroum:—

"Ismail Pasha telegraphs that Russian left wing has been forced back across frontier with loss, and he is close on the frontier and still advancing."

No. 180.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 10.)

(No 249.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 10, 1877.

SIR A. KEMBALL telegraphs on the 6th:—

"Commander-in-chief encamped within 18 miles of Kars. Russians said to be retiring on their position at Kevreekduvra on the road to Gumri. Their whole force no more than 40 battalions. Commander-in-chief has received reinforcement of 5 battalions to-day from Erzeroum; 3 more expected from Khorassan. Expedition under him will be then 33 battalions, and garrison of Kars 30 battalions. Left wing has effected retreat by cross roads between Karakilissa and Bayazid. I have permitted Captains McCalmont and Trotter to visit Kars."

No. 181.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 10.)

Galata, July 10, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

BRITISH Commissioner to your Lordship:—

"Commission received to-day official intelligence that the Russians instead of torpedoes are sinking barges filled with stone in the Sulina branch. Results very disastrous to future navigation of Danube."

No. 182.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 10.)

(No. 250. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 10, 1877.

SULTAN has just sent Said Pasha to me to say that Russians are advancing on road to Slimno, where it is expected they will attempt to cross the Balkans. Raouf Pasha is ordered to take measures at once for the defence of the pass, but it is doubtful whether reinforcements will reach him in time. If the Russians reach Slimno the road to Adrianople will be open to them. The Governor of Tarnova has come to Adrianople and describes shocking outrages committed by Russians and Bulgarian Christians upon Mahommedan population.

Sultan says that if these things continue he cannot be responsible for what the Mahommedans may do. I have urged in the strongest manner that every possible means may be taken to restrain them from committing acts of retaliation, and I am

assured that orders will be sent to all the Turkish authorities to do their utmost to prevent them.

I have reason to believe that the Sultan has been informed, I have not yet ascertained through what source, but possibly from Germany, that Russia would make peace upon three principal conditions, viz.: surrender of Batoum, the freedom of navigation for her fleets of Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and the autonomy of Bulgaria.

Nothing was said of what is meant by Bulgaria. As far as I can judge, these terms would not at this moment be accepted, although Sultan has not much hope that Abdul Kerim Pasha, who still remains inactive at Shumla, will be able to check Russian advance.

It is of the utmost importance that Her Majesty's Government should without delay come to some decision as to course they intend to pursue, and that I should have definite instructions.

No. 183.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 10.)

(Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 10, 1877, 1·15 P.M.

WITH reference to my telegram of this morning, my suspicions as to the source through which terms of peace have been proposed to the Sultan have been confirmed by what Admiral Hornby heard this morning from Prince Reuss.

No. 184.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 10.)

(No. 252.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 10, 1877.

CONSUL at Erzeroum telegraphs following dated this morning:—

"Mukhtar Pasha has reached Schiwen Kaza, three miles from Kars, and established communication with garrison; Russians, having raised siege, retired to Kurek Dere and Shuragel. Ismail Pasha with right wing at Mossou, nine miles from frontier. Russian left, under Dergan Aropi, holds position at foot of Ararat."

No. 185.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 10.)

(No. 253.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 10, 1877.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 218, please inform Consul at Tiflis that Porte requests that Paleologus and sixty-three Turkish subjects detained there be delivered under flag of truce to Turkish outposts near Tchurukson.

No. 186.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 10.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, July* 10, 1877.

COLONEL WELLESLEY writes, dated the 8th instant:—

"News just received at head-quarters of the occupation of Tirnova to-day by Russian cavalry."

No. 187.

Vice-Consul Joly to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 10.)

Smyrna, July 10, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

ALL vessels prohibited from passing Kastle entrance of this bay between sunset and sunrise.

No. 188.

Major-General Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.—(Received at the Foreign Office, July 11.)

(No. 12.) *Erzeroom, June 21, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to subjoin my telegram, *en clair*, of Tuesday, the 19th instant, by which I meant to acquaint your Excellency with the defeat of the right wing of the Turkish army near Tahir on the previous Saturday, and the probability of Mukhtar Pasha being cut off from direct communication with Erzeroum by a Russian occupation of Kupri-Keui. That the Russians had appeared before that place was reported to the Governor here on the morning after my arrival, but we now learn that they have again retired as far as Eshik Kalna, leaving open as well the road from Kupri-Keui to Khorasan as the road from Khorasan viâ Tai Khojeh to Delibaba. This retrograde movement of the Russians is ostensibly explained by a reverse sustained by their main body before Kars, and by the investment of Bayazid by Faik Pasha coming from Van, both which occurrences Mukhtar Pasha, in the inclosed telegram to myself, declares to be authentic, also by the projected march of Mukhtar Pasha himself, of which, however, he tells me nothing, viâ Mezingherd and Gulentab, to operate in the rear of General Derkokhasoff's army. By these combinations, and by the renewed advance of the defeated right wing, which is supposed to have rallied behind the Delibaba Pass, he aims, it is said, at surrounding the Russian left wing and compelling it to fight at a disadvantage, or to lay down its arms. By another account, Mukhtar Pasha has left the major portion of his force to maintain the position of Zewin (Khurrum) Duzi (whither Ismail Pasha, Wali of Erzeroum, has proceeded to assume the command during his absence), and has marched with 5 battalions of infantry, some 300 Nizam cavalry, a body of irregular cavalry, and 1 field battery to Khorasan, *en route*, as since reported, for Delibaba.

Prior to this arrangement Mukhtar Pasha had under his immediate command at the Zewin Duzi, 24 battalions of infantry (including 9 withdrawn from Olti), 2 batteries of field artillery, and 15 mountain guns (including 3 from Olti),* and perhaps 2,500 horsemen of every description. There must now remain, therefore, at Zewin Duzi, 19 battalions of infantry, 1 field battery, and 15 mountain guns; number of cavalry unknown.

At Delibaba the force under Lion Mustafa Pasha, or Reis Ahmed Pasha, would be the troops rallied after their defeat at Tahir, originally consisting of 12 battalions of infantry, 1 field battery, 4 mountain guns, and, say, 1,000 or 1,200 horsemen, reinforced, as per margin,† by 13 battalions and 3 field batteries, with cavalry. The force under Faik Pasha before Bayazid is said to consist of 7 battalions of infantry, 1 field battery, and 6 mountain guns, and a strong contingent of Kurdish Bashi-Bazouk levies, horse and foot. At Kupri-Keui is stationed 1 battalion of infantry, to which has been attached the body of 800 or 1,000 horsemen lately come from Erzeroum with Reis Ahmed Pasha.

From the Russian side 5 battalions with cavalry, and probably a field battery (8 guns), have been detached from Kars, it is reported, either to relieve Bayazid, or to reinforce General Derkokhasoff.

It is needless for me to speculate on the issue of these movements. The opposing

* Two of the eleven battalions previously stationed at Olti and about 100 zaptieh horsemen, with, I believe, three mountain guns, remain in garrison that place. Several contingents of Circassians and other irregular horse have recently come to the front.

† Two battalions on their march from Delibaba to join Mehemed Pasha when the battle occurred; one battalion and one field battery at Tukhojeh; two battalions encountered by us marching from Kupri-keui to Khorassan; three battalions and one field battery under Reis Ahmed Pasha from Erzeroum; and five battalions and one field battery accompanying Mukhtar Pasha from Zewin Duzi; and cavalry, number not known.

forces are in presence, and as success on either side must depend upon rapidity of action, in order mutually to relieve or overwhelm the corps engaged at one end or the other of the line of operations between Delibaba and Bayazid, a collision cannot be long deferred, and its result must reach your Excellency by telegraph prior to the receipt of this letter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. B. KEMBALL.

Copy of Telegram No. 17.

Erzeroom, Tuesday.

Arrived safe yesterday from extreme right. Sorry to find my ciphers refused transmission. "Quoi faire?" Truth unpalatable as medicine, though not less healthful. Pitiable to see "le droit" trodden under foot. 1 Samuel, chap. xi. verse 11. The fatal bridge having been traversed, God preserve the rest.

Inclosure 1 in No. 188.

Captain Trotter, R.E., to Major-General Sir A. Kemball.

Bivouac, Haidar Kom, at 9 miles S.E. of Delibaba, June 23, 1877, 5 A.M.

Sir,

WE slept at Khorasan on the night of the 20th, and heard on the morning of the 21st that the Muchir had passed through in the night; we followed and overtook him in the early morning at the entrance of the Delibaba defile. The whole force advanced about 7·30 A.M., 19 battalions of infantry, 12 field guns, 10 mountain guns, and about 2,500 cavalry. The Russian outposts were encountered in the afternoon, and in the skirmishing 3 Turks and 7 Russians were killed. The whole force bivouacked at Haidar Kom; it was bitterly cold and damp. On the morning of the 22nd, the whole force advanced, leaving 12 guns and 5 battalions as a reserve at Haidar Kom, and arrived in sight of the Russian camp at 8 A.M., and came into contact with his skirmishers at noon; the battle raged furiously until dark. The mountain guns were in position from the first; 2 field guns from the reserve came into action at 2 P.M., and 5 others before dark. The troops advanced to within 1½ miles of the Russian camp, and remained there all night. There was no firing up to 5 A.M. this morning, and the Turkish guns (visible through a field-glass) occupied the same positions as yesterday. The infantry behaved splendidly; cavalry of no account; about 150 wounded were brought in here yesterday (6 miles from battle-field). Mukhtar Pasha was under a heavy shell fire during the whole action. The Russian force was said to be 10 battalions and 30 guns. On the right and centre the Russians had at least 8 field guns in action, and numerous mountain guns. The action commenced by the repulse of the Russians on the left by 6 (?) battalions under Moussa Pasha, who is said to have captured a gun. The remainder of the fighting was almost entirely on the right, where the Russians tried to turn the Turkish positions. The Turkish troops are enthusiastic, and their discipline good; their skirmishers advanced in beautiful order.

Four guns and 1 battalion from the reserve are here, all the others having been brought up yesterday during the action. There are 2 battalions half-way between Delibaba and Khorasan, 1 battalion at Khorasan, and 5 battalions at Kupri-Keui, and 15 battalions still at Zewin Diezé. Mustapha Pasha is my authority; he commands the reserve.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY TROTTER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 188.

Captain McCalmont to Major-General Sir A. Kemball.

Haider Kom, June 23, 1877, 5 A.M.

Sir,

A BATTLE took place yesterday at Yeskekiliaz, about 9 miles south-east of Delibaba.

The Turkish troops marched the day before from the intrenched position at the

defile of Delibaba, and at 8 A.M. yesterday a position was taken up overlooking the Russian camp, and about two miles distant from it. Fighting commenced about 12 noon, and lasted till dark. The force under Muchir Mukhtar Pasha consisted of 19 battalions, including reserves, of which 14 were under fire, 1,500 cavalry, 2 batteries of field artillery, of which 4 guns were in action the greater part of the day. There were 10 mountain guns.

The Russians had probably 10 battalions of infantry, 6 regiments cavalry, 8 field guns, and 1 rocket troop were observed to be engaged, and several mountain guns.

The advance of the Turkish infantry, and the general behaviour of the troops, with the exception of the cavalry, was splendid. The artillery practice on the Turkish side was bad, and the mountain guns in position were not capable of supporting the infantry advance.

Speaking generally, the infantry supports were not pushed up with sufficient rapidity, especially at the commencement, to be of use, otherwise the Russian left must have given way. On the Turkish left there was severe fighting, which resulted in the Russians being driven back, and it is reported with the loss of 3 guns. The Turkish troops now occupy positions slightly in advance of those held yesterday morning. I believe the Russians struck part of their camp, and despatched some baggage to the rear during the engagement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH McCALMONT,
Captain, 7th Hussars.

No. 189.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 30. Political.) *Adrianople, June 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship the copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador, reporting the repeal of the prohibition to export grain from this Vilayet, and the improved measures adopted by the Porte for collecting the Government tithes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 189.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, June 28, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch to your Excellency of the 28th April, I have the honour to state that the Vali has officially notified to me that the Minister of the Interior has ordered the prohibition to export grain from the Vilayet of Adrianople to be taken off, except as regards the Sandjak of Slimnia.

This measure has been decided upon in consequence of the certainty of an unprecedentedly abundant harvest. Reaping has begun in most districts, and the yield promises to exceed even that of the memorable year 1856, which has as yet been without a parallel.

I have the satisfaction to report that the Central Government has taken wise and timely steps for the collection of the Government tithes of agricultural produce in a way to obviate the inconvenience, loss, and crying abuses to which the producer was subjected under the old system of farming the tithes. In pursuance of these arrangements, which are an improvement of the method inaugurated last year, a Chief Commissioner, Hakki Bey, has been appointed by the Porte, whilst it has been left to the Supreme Council of the Vilayet to appoint the Inspectors to act under the supervision of Hakki Bey in the various sandjaks. The local Council of each Caza in its turn is charged to furnish its own staff of collectors, who are to perform their duties under the control of the above officials.

I may here mention an instructive incident which occurred in connection with one of the sandjak inspectorships, as illustrating the growth of an independent spirit

in questions affecting public interests, and the progress which has been made towards administrative decentralization under the new constitutional régime.

A relative of the Minister of War came here with strong letters of recommendation from Redif Pasha and other dignitaries of the Porte. Although supported by the Vali and the other official members of the Supreme Council in his application for an appointment as Inspector, the non-official members openly and decidedly objected to the candidate as being obviously incompetent for the post. In this a leading part was taken by Izzet Bey, a brother of Rassim Bey, one of the most prominent speakers in the Ottoman Parliament. The Greek Archbishop and Armenian Bishop joined the local elected members in opposing the appointment; and thus the application came to be rejected by a majority of the Council.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 190.

Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, R.E., to Mr. Layard.—(Received at the Foreign Office, July 11.)

(No. 104.)

Sir, *In Railway, Rustchuk to Shumla, June 29, 1877.*

ON paying a visit to Muchir Esref Pasha, commanding at Rustchuk, yesterday afternoon, on my return to that place from Nikopoli, I was informed that he had been obliged to move the hospitals outside the town, as the Russians had fired on them, notwithstanding that the white flag with Red Cross or Crescent floated over them.

I at once, accompanied by Lieutenant Chermside, R.E., and Captain Lord Melgund, Mounted Border Rifles, visited one of the buildings which had been appropriated as a hospital, viz., the konak. We went into each room of the main building (not those of the Haremlik), and carefully counted all the shells' damages, and found that, excluding all marks about which there could be the slightest doubt, at least twenty shells had struck this one hospital.

I have since spoken to one of the English doctors and he assures me that seventeen patients in the konak hospital were wounded, and that two men on duty there were killed.

The Muchir mentioned that a paragraph had appeared in some newspaper saying that a hospital flag had been hoisted over a building occupied by the Serdar Ekrem or himself; it may be as well, therefore, if I state that, although I have been on several occasions (upwards of three weeks in all) at Rustchuk, I have never seen a Red Cross flag improperly flown.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM LENNOX, *Military Attaché.*

No. 191.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 73. Political.)

My Lord, *Scutari, June 27, 1877.*

IN my despatch, Political No. 71 of the 24th instant, whilst I was only in possession of the purely Turkish versions of the manner in which the junction of the Herzegovina and Spuz forces had been effected, I ventured to express some anxiety for the Montenegrins who, I thought, might be about to be overwhelmed by the Turks.

Matters, however, do not appear to be yet regarded in so serious an aspect by the Montenegrins themselves, and from information which has now reached me from Spuz and Podgoritza through confidential sources, I, too, am inclined to suspend forming a decided opinion until Suleiman Pasha's successful march across Montenegro carries with it other consequences besides that of having transferred his force from the Herzegovina to North Albania.

My impression that the Turks had suffered a serious defeat, telegraphed to your Lordship on the 21st instant, is fully confirmed by the following extracts from a letter from one of my correspondents at Spuz:—

"The Turkish force consisted of about 20,000 men. It left Spuz on the morning of the 20th, a clear, quiet, bright summer day, and moved in two columns, the right under Hafiz Pasha, towards Martinici; and the left, under the Commander-in-chief, Ali Saib Pasha, towards Yeni-Keui (Novo Selo). Hafiz Pasha took possession of the Martinici hills about the village, but the higher one, where the village is, was not reached. Nothing happened until about eleven o'clock, when the Turks were suddenly and disastrously defeated. I can hardly give a comprehensible account of the battle; everything came about so quickly. Hafiz Pasha was under the impression that he was protecting Ali Saib Pasha's flank by occupying the Martinici hills, but he was not aware that he was in the immediate vicinity of the enemy. Suddenly, the Montenegrins, who were lying concealed quite close among the rocks, opened a murderous fire. The Turks stood for about five minutes, then broke and ran, with the Montenegrins close on their backs as far as the plain. Hundreds were killed. Two hundred boxes of ammunition and the animals that were carrying them were left behind. Ali Saib Pasha made a backward movement to meet the defeated column, but his troops joined in the flight. During the retreat the Turks lost all courage, and could not be brought to stand and oppose the Montenegrins, who were but few in number. Many threw their rifles away and laid down and allowed themselves unresistingly to be butchered. I am assured not a few died of sheer fright. The hospitals were quickly filled by the wounded. That day 350 wounded were admitted. I counted 100 others who had died before being able to reach the hospital, and as many more who were distributed in private houses. I observed that on this occasion slight wounds terminated fatally, and I cannot account for this except by the shock sustained through the fright occasioned by the sudden onslaught of the Montenegrins. The Mouchir, who endeavoured to stop the flight of some of the irregulars, was told to stand aside and allow them to pass into Spuz, otherwise they would shoot his Excellency. I believe the loss of the Turks cannot have been less than 1,500 in dead and wounded. The reserve battalion of Kilis (5th army corps, 5th regiment, 2nd battalion, 1st han Redifs) suffered the most, having lost 300 on the field of battle."

It appears almost superfluous to note that, after this battle too, several of the wounded were found to be dreadfully mutilated, as now the slightest encounter between the Turks and Montenegrins is almost sure to furnish examples of nose-cutting or decapitation of the dead.

Although I am indisposed to cast a shadow of a doubt on the wish and firm intention of the Prince of Montenegro to prevent all acts of barbarity by his people, I cannot help thinking that some of his commanders and advisers are of opinion that it is desirable to continue the perpetration of mutilations, so that the dangers and horrors of war against Montenegro may still terrorize the Turks. Advisers who, I know, supported the inexpediency of incumbering the finances of Montenegro with a charge for the subsistence of prisoners, can feel little hesitation in counselling mutilations.

Zaeros Bey, the chief medical man with the Turkish force at Spuz, in writing to me about some of the recent mutilations, describes the case of one of the victims as follows:—

"Un sergent a été complètement défiguré; on lui a coupé avec le nez et les lèvres la majeure partie de la face! C'est horrible à voir, je vous assure! Et il porte en dehors de cela, ce pauvre diable, sept autres blessures dont une par arme à feu et le reste par couteau."

The active part taken by the Roman Catholic mountaineers in the recent battles has added to the animosity with which this war is being carried on. The Montenegrins have treated with unsparing severity all the Christian mountaineers that have fallen into their power, and have decapitated the dead in return for the decapitations perpetrated on the 16th by the Albanians.

Since the defeat of the 20th, however, I am assured many of the irregular troops are returning to their homes.

Suleiman Pasha's junction with Ali Saib Pasha, although frequently announced by the Turks as imminent, when it occurred came unexpectedly upon the Spuz force, which had been rallied and reinforced, and marched forward again on the 22nd, but which Ali Saib Pasha felt great hesitation in withdrawing at any great distance from Spuz.

At dawn on the 23rd Suleiman Pasha's troops were seen from the Kokoshevina camp descending towards Martinici from the village of Slatina. They advanced in two columns, having in their centre all the baggage train, with the wounded and sick,

the rear-guard being actively engaged with Montenegrin skirmishers, who were closely following its steps, whilst, from time to time, the more distant Montenegrin artillery would send a shell into the middle of the columns.

Suleiman Pasha, I understand, has claimed to have secured free communications between Spuz and Niehsich, and to have deprived the Montenegrins of all confidence in the strength of their mountain fastnesses, and that consequently their complete subjugation can only be retarded a few days; and he has reported his losses as comparatively small, when the fact is recollected that he has had to cross mountain ranges in spite of resistance such as Montenegrins are accustomed to make.

From careful inquiry, what I really believe to be the case is that Suleiman Pasha and his troops, after they had once embarked upon their attempt to form a junction with Ali Saib Pasha on Montenegrin territory, and when they found that no friendly army was advancing towards them, felt that the only way to avoid annihilation was by continuing their onward march to Spuz, and this they accomplished, in spite of an opposition which almost decimated their ranks.

Turkish official accounts reduce Suleiman Pasha's loss to 1,500 men *hors de combat* but, without accepting the exaggerated estimates of the Montenegrins, I believe that the killed and wounded have not been much less than 4,000.

Spuz and Podgoritza can no longer be said to possess special hospitals; every house, every court-yard, every shed, contains victims of the war. And now Scutari is rapidly passing into the same state. Fifteen houses have been requisitioned and turned into hospitals, and 1,500 wounded and 300 sick are already here receiving such care as only five medical men—the whole of the military medical staff—can afford them.

Suleiman Pasha's junction, as a military operation, has only, as yet, had the result of augmenting the Turkish army in North Albania, of denuding the Herzegovina of its military force, of reuniting the Montenegrins, whose numbers cannot well afford to be separated, and of leaving the approaches to Niehsich once more in the hands of his enemies.

Whilst the two armies were encamped together in the plain of Bielopavlich, they were incessantly molested by the fire of the Montenegrins, to the extent that the troops have now had, for greater repose, to be removed to Podgoritza, where preparations are immediately to be commenced for the march to Cettigné, which, it is said, the Porte is determined shall be accomplished.

The perusal of this despatch, I believe, will leave your Lordship with an impression of bloodshed and horrors, but with no decided idea of what the carnage is likely to lead to. However, no better notion can be conveyed of the results of the war going on here. The Porte either believes in the published reports of its Generals, and fancies it is victorious, or hopes, with a ceaseless stream of doomed soldiers, to ultimately exhaust the limited Montenegrin population.

"Surely," said the other day to me a Turk who holds a high military position, "civilized Europe has no conception of what a cruel, wretched war this is. We, with our official reports, pervert the truth, and the newspaper correspondents in Montenegro, with the Prince's decoration dangling round their necks or in their button-holes, meekly publish the fabrications of the Russian Chancery."

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 192.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 74. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, July* 1, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that the armies of Ali Saib Pasha and Suleiman Pasha are now encamped outside and on the south of Podgoritza, in the plain which leads towards the River Sem.

Suleiman Pasha's force is said to consist of forty-one battalions, and from unofficial sources I learn that it does not exceed 20,000 men.

By order of the Porte, Ali Saib Pasha has assumed the supreme command of both armies, and I hear he has divided them into three columns, and that it is believed they will march simultaneously and in parallel lines, either to-morrow or the day after, for Dodosi and Rieka, and ultimately Cettigné.

All the Bashi-Bazouks and other irregular troops, amounting to about 6,000 men, have been conveyed across the Lake to Muric, whence they will attempt to penetrate into Montenegro, under the command of the Vali of Scutari, Mustafa Pasha.

The antecedents of Muric, as a base of offensive operations, are not favourable, and the Bashi-Bazouks are inclined to think that they are about to be sacrificed by the commanders of the regular troops.

Two of the batteries of field artillery from Podgoritza have been ordered to proceed to Monastir, as also two squadrons of cavalry. One of the latter crossed Montenegro with Suleiman Pasha, and the other has been hitherto used as an escort by the Commander-in-chief.

The wounded continue to pour into Scutari daily from Spuz and Podgoritza.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 193.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 699.) *Therapia, June* 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of telegrams and correspondence which have passed between Vice-Consul Sankey and myself, with reference to the excesses alleged to have been committed upon Christians in the Dobrudcha by Circassians and other marauders.

Last night, when the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha dined at the Embassy, I urged upon them in the strongest terms the absolute necessity of taking measures to protect the Christians in this district, and their property. His Highness said that the country was in a state of war and anarchy in consequence of the presence of the Russians, and that the civil authorities had been necessarily withdrawn on their advance. Nothing, therefore, could be done for the protection of those who remained behind. Safvet Pasha, whilst expressing to me his grief that such outrages as I described to him had been committed, observed that the Porte was helpless to prevent them, and that they had been foreseen by those who were aware of what would be the consequences of this war upon which Russia had determined to enter.

Prince Reuss also spoke last night to the Grand Vizier about some German colonists who had settled in the Dobrudcha, and had accepted Ottoman nationality. One of their villages had been attacked, and its inhabitants had defended themselves, losing one or two of their number and killing some of their assailants. The German Ambassador appears to have received the same answer from his Highness that I had.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 193.

Mr. Layard to Vice-Consul Sankey.

Therapia, June 28, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

OBTAIN information at once as to whether Turkish troops are devastating country in their retreat, and whether excesses are being committed upon the Christian population in the Dobrudscha.

Did the Bulgarians take up arms when the Russians crossed? I authorize you to send a confidential person, if possible, to obtain this information.

Inclosure 2 in No. 193.

Vice-Consul Sankey to Mr. Layard.

Kustendje, June 29, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

NO excesses have been committed by Turkish soldiers, but by marauders. The second part of your telegram I answer in the negative.

Inclosure 3 in No. 193.

Vice-Consul Sankey to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Kustendje, June* 26, 1877.

I REGRET to have to report to your Excellency that massacres were going on all day yesterday in the villages not far from Kustendji by Noghai Tartars and Circassians. I am told there are fifty dead bodies at Gargalik. The authorities are at Medjidieh, and the Russians within six hours' march. I telegraphed a protest to the Mutessarif, but nothing was done. I am now going on to the spot, as I am told there are some children that may be alive, having taken refuge in the marshes. I beg you will kindly excuse this hurried note, as, if I can get back in time, I will write a full report.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. F. SANKEY.

No. 194.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 700.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June* 30, 1877.

I RECEIVED the day before yesterday a telegram from Mr. Stuart, informing me that 120 cases of Turkish military accoutrements, which had been shipped at Constantinople for Prevesa, on board the Austrian mail packet, and, after being landed at Corfu, reshipped on board the corresponding Austrian packet, had been transferred to a lighter, and, in consequence of a protest of the Russian Consul against their transmission as a breach of neutrality, detained at Corfu by order of the Greek authorities; that the Porte had protested against the detention of these cases, and had ordered a war steamer to proceed at once to Corfu to take possession of them, and that the Turkish Minister at Athens had announced to M. Tricoupi in overbearing terms that a refusal to give them up would be treated as a violation of neutrality; that M. Tricoupi had informed Mr. Stuart of his intention to send Greek ships of war to Corfu to forbid by force, if necessary, the removal of these cases, and had expressed the hope that Her Majesty's Government and the other neutral Powers would also send ships to defend the neutrality of Corfu; that the Russian Minister had supported the protest of his Consul, and Mr. Stuart expressed his conviction that, whether right or wrong in acting upon the protest, the Greek Government had done so with a sincere desire to maintain an impartial neutrality, the Turkish Minister at Athens having last year protested against the transmission of arms from Corfu to Montenegro, which was not then at war; and that M. Tricoupi, before receiving the announcement of the Ottoman Minister, had sent orders to Corfu that the cases in question might be re-embarked on board the next Austrian steamer, if such was the desire of the Austrian Consul.

I immediately sent Mr. Elliot to ascertain the view that my Austrian colleague took of the matter, and Mr. Sandison to Safvet Pasha, to urge his Excellency to prevent a Turkish ship of war being sent to Corfu, which might lead to a quarrel with Greece, and perhaps with other States. Count Zichy agreed with me in thinking that, as the Austrian Lloyd's Company had agreed to take the cases in question, which are stated to have contained soldiers' uniforms, from one part of the Turkish dominions to another, and that, as they were merely being transferred, in the usual course, at Corfu, from one steamer to another, there was no obligation on the part of the Hellenic authorities to yield to the demand of the Russian Consul to seize them on the ground of a breach of neutrality.

Count Zichy said that he would telegraph in this sense to Vienna, and he hoped that instructions would be sent to the Austro-Hungarian Consul at Corfu, which would lead to the settlement of the matter.

Safvet Pasha declared that if Photiades Bey had used threatening language to the Hellenic Government, and had sent a ship-of-war to Corfu, he had exceeded his instructions. If a vessel had been dispatched, it was to receive on board the cases, which the Hellenic authorities were bound to give up, and if there were any difficulties in the matter, he was ready to have them settled by arbitration, and had no intention whatever of having recourse to violent measures. His Excellency repeated this declaration to me yesterday, when I informed him that I had learnt from Mr. Stuart that the Greek Government had sent two small iron-clad vessels to Corfu.

Similar explanations were given last night at this Embassy by Safvet Pasha to

M. Coundouriottis, who had taken up the matter with a high hand, and talked to me very big about the two Hellenic iron-clads, and what Greece could do against a Turkish fleet, I asked the Greek Minister if he were satisfied. He answered, in a somewhat excited manner, that he was, as the statement made by Safvet Pasha proved that "Photiades Bey had lied" ("qu'il avait menti"). I thought then, I observed, that the matter had better be allowed to drop, and that it would be prudent to avoid any provocation to Turkey, which might lead to a quarrel, as he must know that a couple of Turkish iron-clads could blow the whole Hellenic fleet out of the water.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 195.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 701. Very Confidential.)
Therapia, June 30, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Grand Vizier, when dining at the Embassy yesterday, asked me whether I could tell him what was the policy of Germany at the present time, with regard to Turkey, and what Prince Reuss' views and instructions were. I replied that I could not enlighten his Highness on these points; but I should be glad to know why he asked me these questions. He said that Prince Reuss had, once or twice, dropped hints to him that peace depended upon Germany, as one word from her would put a stop to the war, and that the Porte must look to Germany if it wanted to come to terms with Russia. But, his Highness went on to say, the Prince remarked, laughing, that England was going to send troops to Gallipoli, and to give the Turkish Government money, consequently, the Porte might prefer looking to her. The German Ambassador had more than once, his Highness added, alluded to this intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to send troops to Gallipoli. He wished to know whether there was any such intention on their part. I told his Highness that I could not give him any information on the subject, and that probably Prince Reuss' information was derived from newspapers, which were accessible to every one.

I had previously heard, on good authority, that Baron Testa, the principal German Dragoman, had said at the Porte "that Germany was under no necessity of sending, like the English, a fleet to protect Constantinople, as a word on her part would be sufficient to bring about peace."

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 196.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 703. Very Confidential.)
Therapia, June 30, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram No. 155 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to state that I have learnt from a trustworthy and very confidential source that the Sultan insisted upon sending his letter to the Emperor of Morocco through Senoosy in opposition to the advice of his Ministers. Hence the contradictory reports that I have received from the Porte as to the mission of this individual.

The Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha disapproving of it, and not wishing to bear the responsibility of its results, denied the fact that Senoosy was the bearer of a letter and presents from the Sultan. It was only from a person in intimate relations with His Majesty that I ascertained the truth.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 197.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 707. Confidential.)
Therapia, July 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD requested Mr. Sandison to ascertain, from confidential sources, what the views of the Turkish Ministers might be with reference to a peace with Russia, and how far the reports that the German Ambassador had proposed to the Porte the mediation of his Government between Turkey and Russia were well-founded. He has addressed a report to me on these subjects, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 197.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)
Therapia, June 30, 1877.

Sir,

IT may be worth reporting to your Excellency a conversation which I had with M. Testa, my German colleague, who gave me the most positive assurance that the German Government had no intention whatever of taking the initiative for any proposals of peace at the present moment, and that no credence should therefore be given to the rumours which are current on the subject.

Our policy, he added, has already been announced, and I can assure you it will be strictly founded on the words of Prince Bismarck when he made the following statement in the course of last spring:—"Lorsque les deux Puissances seront fatiguées de la guerre nos conseils pourront alors avoir un influence efficace tant à St. Pétersbourg qu'à Constantinople." At the present stage of the war "no offer for mediation could possibly come from us, and unless Germany takes the resolution now, which I do not think she will, of imposing peace, she will, as I have said, wait until one of the two belligerents should declare its inability to continue the struggle."

It is not possible to ascertain whether the Porte is already prepared to make such declaration, and there is reason to believe, on the other hand, that it would readily avail itself of the first opportunity to enter into negotiations for peace, though on what basis it is not easy to say. I even hear, confidentially, from a trustworthy source, that the question has already been secretly discussed by some of the Cabinet Ministers. There seems, however, to be such disagreement amongst them at the present moment about almost every question, and there is at the same time so much Palace intrigue paralyzing, in many instances, the action of the Porte, that Safvet Pasha had almost determined, quite recently, to send in his resignation.

To revert to the subject of peace, it is difficult to say on what basis the Porte would be disposed to treat, but if left to cope thus single-handed with Russia, there will probably be no serious objection made by it to the cession of Batoum and some part of Asia Minor by way of satisfying Russia in point of territorial acquisitions, whereas the strongest resistance need be apprehended against any such acquisitions in European Turkey.

(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 198.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 709.)
Therapia, July 2, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 228 of the 21st ultimo, transmitting to me copy of a report from the British Vice-Consul at Candia, relating to acts of sacrilege and other outrages alleged to have been committed by Turkish soldiers in Crete, and instructing me to call the attention of the Porte to these occurrences, I have the honour to state that, as your Lordship will perceive by my

despatch No. 678 of the 27th instant, I had forestalled your Lordship's instructions in this matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 199.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 712.) *Therapia, July 3, 1877.*

My Lord,

ACCOUNTS are reaching Constantinople, from various sources, of great outrages committed by Circassians upon the Christian population of the Dobrudscha. It is possible that these accounts are, in some instances, very much exaggerated, as is usually the case. But I have little doubt that excesses are being committed now that the Turkish authorities and troops have been withdrawn, in consequence of the Russian advance. I have already informed your Lordship that I have directed Vice-Consul Sankey to report to me on the subject, and, if possible, to proceed himself to the Dobrudscha, or to send some trustworthy person, in order to obtain accurate information on the subject. I have further requested Mr. Reade, Her Majesty's Consul at Rustchuk, who arrived here the day before yesterday, to proceed at once to Varna, and, if necessary, to Kustendjie, in order to induce the local authorities to take such measures as may be in their power for the protection of the Christians and their property.

Mr. Reade informs me that he heard, on what he considers good authority, at Varna that Russian agents were inciting the Bulgarians to massacre the Mussulmans, and that the Turkish authorities had sent about 3,000 irregular cavalry or Bashi-Bazouks to protect the Mahommedan population. Should such be the case, the consequences to the Christians may be serious. Reports that the Russians are murdering the Mussulmans are beginning to spread even in Constantinople. These reports, with the accounts of their alleged inhuman proceedings in bombarding the town of Rustchuk, and the destruction of whole villages in Circassia, may lead the Mahommedans to deplorable acts of vengeance and retaliation. One or two Turkish gentlemen have spoken to me with a good deal of alarm on this subject. It is to be hoped that their anticipations will not be fulfilled; but if the Russians give to this war the character of one of a deadly crusade against the Mussulmans, it may become a bloody one indeed. It is more likely that they will resort to their old policy of exciting the Christians to commit some outrages upon the Mahommedans, in order that the latter, as in the case of the Bulgarian "atrocities," may retaliate, and be guilty of excesses which may excite the indignation of Europe and promote the designs of Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 200.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 713.) *Therapia, July 3, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Circulars addressed by the Porte to its Representatives abroad, for communication to the Governments to which they are accredited, with reference to the cruelties and outrages alleged to have been committed by the Russians against the Mussulman population in the Caucasus, and of Ardahan, and to the destruction of Turkish merchant vessels with their crew by torpedoes, have been published in the Turkish newspapers. I understand that a further Circular was yesterday sent denouncing the wholesale destruction of Mussulman villages and the slaughter of their inhabitants by the Russians in that part of Armenia which they have recently been compelled to abandon. I need scarcely point out how much these descriptions of excesses attributed to the Russians, coupled with the conviction, daily gaining ground, that they are exciting the Bulgarians to massacre the Mahomedans, are calculated to engender a spirit of vengeance amongst the Turks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 201.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 714.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 3, 1877.

I HAVE reason to believe that there are persons of influence endeavouring to persuade the Sultan that the time is come for him to unfold the holy banner of the Prophet, declare the "Jehad," or religious war, and place himself at the head of his army in Europe. They point in support of their advice to the Proclamations of the Emperor of Russia to his people, in which he declares that he is fighting for the Orthodox faith, and to that to the Bulgarians, which was received here yesterday, calling upon them to join with Russia in obtaining their independence and in promoting the cause of their common religion. The Sultan has not as yet, I believe, been inclined to listen to these counsels, but he said yesterday that if the Russians advanced towards the Balkans he should probably go to Adrianople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 202.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 715. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 3, 1877.

I RECEIVED on the 30th ultimo, your Lordship's telegram of that date, acquainting me with the decision of Her Majesty's Government that the fleet should go again to Besika Bay. Yesterday morning I was informed by Admiral Hornby that he expected to be there to-day with his ships. I also learnt that a telegram from Athens had announced the departure of the fleet under sealed orders. Knowing how mistrustful and suspicious the Porte has recently become of England, I thought it better that it should be made acquainted by me with the step taken by Her Majesty's Government, rather than through common rumour. I, therefore, sent Mr. Sandison at once to inform the Sultan's Secretary and the Grand Vizier that the British fleet would probably be at the mouth of the Dardanelles on the following day. I instructed him merely to convey this information without attempting to give any explanations of the reasons for the measure should he be questioned on the subject.

He informs me that the Sultan sent his thanks to me for my communication, and expressed an earnest hope that this was a first proof of returning sympathy on the part of England for himself and his people. The Grand Vizier, to whom Mr. Sandison gave my message, received it very coldly, merely remarking, "Ce n'est pas la première fois."

Mr. Sandison subsequently found that the departure of the fleet for Besika Bay was known in Constantinople, and that the impression it had made upon some Turks connected with the press whom he happened to see was not a favourable one. For this I was quite prepared, as your Lordship will have perceived by my telegram of the 1st instant. It has come to my knowledge that persons well known as working in the interests of Russia have been doing their best of late to lead the Turkish Government and people to distrust and suspect England. They endeavour to persuade them that, so far from our desiring to maintain the Turkish Empire and to preserve it from complete destruction, we have agreed to allow Russia to take any part of it she may think fit, on condition that we may have Egypt, and that Constantinople may be handed over to a neutral Power. They place this construction upon the correspondence which has passed between your Lordship, Count Schouvaloff, and Prince Gortchakow, which has been published in the Turkish newspapers, and point out that the Porte, by coming to a direct and separate understanding with Russia, would obtain much more favourable terms than they can expect to obtain through England. I have reason to believe that the language held by the German Ambassador tends to strengthen this opinion.

On the other hand, Mr. Butler Johnstone, and other Englishmen of extreme views on the subject of Turkey, who live with the Softa, Ali Souave, at the Lyceum of Galata Serai, and consort with the reactionary party, encourage the Turks to believe that the counsels of England tend to restrain and embarrass them, that they can expect nothing whatever from her, and that if they wish to succeed against Russia, they must

refuse all foreign aid and advice, and must rely entirely upon the religious and national spirit of the Mussulmans. By following this course the Turks, they maintain, will defeat the Russians, and will be able to march to Moscow, perhaps even, according to some of these counsellors, to annex Hungary. However absurd these ideas may be, they make an impression upon the Turks, especially now that they believe that they have beaten the Russians in Asia. Attempts are being made to put them into the head of Sultan, whom Mr. Butler Johnstone is in the habit of seeing.

Under any circumstances, the presence of the fleet at Besika Bay will, I think, produce a good effect and be of use.

If the Turks look upon it as a threatening measure it will act as a wholesome check upon any hostile feeling towards the Christians and the foreign population of Constantinople, and other places. If, on the contrary, they consider it in the light of a friendly demonstration, it may induce them to treat with consideration and respect Europeans and Christians.

In either case it may afford protection to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 203.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 716. Most Confidential.)
Therapia, July 3, 1877.

My Lord,

I FIND a good deal of change during the last few days in the language and bearing of the Greek Minister, M. Condouriotis. He was formerly anxious to persuade me that the Hellenic Government and people would remain neutral if they were only assured that their interests and claims, and those of the Greek population of Turkey, would be considered at the end of the war with Russia, and that they had no wish to invade Turkish territory or to excite the Christians in it to insurrection, unless a general break-up of the Empire was about to take place in consequence of a successful issue of the Russian invasion. He now talks in a threatening manner of the ill-treatment to which Greece has been subjected by the Porte, and throws out meaning hints that the time has come for her to be revenged. It is well known that M. Condouriotis is very Russian in his views, and that he was of no small use to General Ignatiew in carrying out the General's policy. I have no doubt that he is now acting in the interests of Russia. He seems disinclined to come to an understanding with the Porte on any question, and when he is under the necessity of doing so it is with ill-concealed bad humour. I may mention, as an instance, the way in which he has now thrown over the question of Mount Athos, which is one of much interest to the Greek nation, owing to the attempt of Russia to establish a predominant Slave influence in the peninsula. I had occasion to speak to him on the subject a day or two ago, when he told me that he intended to do nothing in the matter, but to let it take its course.

The Porte has not been slow to perceive this change in the tone of the Greek Minister, and is further alarmed by reports of the concentration of Greek troops on the frontiers of Thessaly and Epirus. I am informed that it is on this account that a large part of the army employed in the campaign against Montenegro is being concentrated near Podgoritza, so that, should the Hellenic Government attempt to incite an insurrectionary movement in those provinces or in Macedonia, a force of, it is stated, about 50,000 men will be ready to march towards the Greek frontier. It appears to me that it would be exceedingly foolish on the part of the Hellenic Government to seek a quarrel with the Porte, especially in the present excited state of public opinion in Turkey, and so I have told M. Condouriotis and such Greeks of influence as I have had an opportunity of seeing. Greece would have nothing to oppose to the Turkish troops that could be thrown upon her, and if the Turks were provoked they might inflict great disasters upon her before any one could come to her help.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 204.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 718.)
Therapia, July 3, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of the instructions that I have given to Consul Reade, who leaves Constantinople to-day for Varna.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 204.

Mr. Layard to Consul Reade.

Therapia, July 2, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE to request that you will proceed at once to Varna, and, if possible, from thence to Kustendji, and that you will ascertain whether the Christians of the Dobrudja and other districts are exposed to outrages on the part of the Turkish soldiers and Circassians or Tartars, and other maraunders, and that you will report to me fully on the subject, as well as generally upon the state of affairs in that part of your Consular district. You can subsequently proceed to Rustchuk, or any other part of Bulgaria, to obtain similar information should you think it desirable. You will use your best endeavours with the Turkish authorities for the protection of the lives and properties of the Christians, and, I need scarcely add, with the Christians to prevent outrages from being committed by them upon Mussulmans. I shall be glad to hear from you, whenever you have an opportunity of writing to me, as to the state of affairs in the country you may be visiting, as to the movement of the Russians, and as to the feeling among the Christian populations with respect to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 205.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 719.)
Therapia, July 3, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of instructions that I have sent to Vice-Consul Brophy with reference to outrages and excesses alleged to be committed upon the Christians by the Mahomedan population in his district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD

Inclosure in No. 205.

Mr. Layard to Vice-Consul Brophy.

Therapia, July 3, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE to request that you will keep me correctly informed of the attitude of the Mahommedans towards the Christians in your Vice-Consular district, but that you will carefully avoid sending accounts of outrages and excesses alleged to have been committed by the former, unless founded upon trustworthy reports, as great exaggeration on this subject is likely to prevail. You will make a distinction between excesses committed by Circassians and other maraunders for the object of plunder and those to be attributed to religious fanaticism.

I have no gun-boat at present at my disposal to send to Bourgas. I trust that the presence of one there will not be necessary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 206.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 721.) *Therapia, July* 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sulina, and of four despatches from Her Majesty's Consul at Rustchuk respecting the state of affairs in Bulgaria and the military movements.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 206.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Varna, June 29, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that it having been decided by the Government to arm and employ the Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians, his Excellency Ahmed Kaiserly Pasha took immediate steps to organize and place them under responsible officers.

This was carried into effect about ten days ago, and up to my quitting Rustchuk yesterday, from the inquiries I made in every direction, no case of disorder had occurred.

I was favourably struck by the feeling evinced by the Bashi-Bazouks I saw and spoke to, and in order to show that of the authorities on the subject, I may mention that an armed Bulgarian Christian was found by some Bashi-Bazouks who took him to the Commandant of Rustchuk. This officer asked why they had brought him; they replied because he was carrying arms; the Commandant replied that he was quite right in arming himself, and that the Christians were all to arm and not to be interfered with as long as they assisted in resisting their common enemy. This appeared to create a very favourable opinion on the Bulgarians, many of whom were already in arms before I quitted Rustchuk.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. READE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 206.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Varna, June 30, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the bombardment of Rustchuk took place on Sunday the 24th instant and two following days. Not having been able to telegraph subsequently, I now have the honour to state that it was continued on Wednesday the 27th from 5 to 8·30 P.M.

During this day the hospitals suffered so much that the invalids were all removed the same evening to outside the town.

The French Consulate was destroyed and the Greek church nearly so. I could not learn the exact number of casualties, but it was said to be very heavy.

All the Consuls except myself left Rustchuk early for Varna. I determined to remain as long as possible so as to render any assistance in my power to the few Christians still in the place.

Next morning, however, it was publicly notified that all non-combatants were required to quit the town at once. Consequently, almost all the few remaining Christians left; and I seeing this, and that all my colleagues and the Civil Government had also gone away, and hearing from the director of the railway that there would be only one more train, and that immediately, as the Russians had established a battery opposite the railway station, I came away also, leaving what remained of the Consulate in charge of two Cavasses supported by the guard of the Imperial Ottoman Bank (next door).

Just as we were coming away the firing recommenced, and I afterwards learnt that it was hotly kept up till 1 P.M.

The railway-line at Kilometre was greatly damaged just as we had passed.

The Austrian Consulate-General was this day destroyed and further great damage to the town.

(Signed) R. READE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 206.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Varna, June 30, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the General Ekhlef Pasha having learnt that a considerable body of Russians had already succeeded in effecting a crossing at Sistova, left Rustchuk on the 25th instant, with all the troops he could take away, amounting to 8,000 men and 12 guns, for Biela, in order to take up a position for opposing the Russian movement inland. On the troops getting ready the medical men of some of the battalions could not be found anywhere. Consequently the English surgeons, Drs. Crookshank and Steven, volunteered to join the troops, and were to leave just as I was quitting Rustchuk.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. READE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 206.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)

Varna, June 30, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE this morning heard from a trustworthy source that the Russians who have crossed into the Dobrudscha have incited the Bulgarian Christians against the Mussulmans there, and that consequently a number of the latter had been massacred.

I was further informed that 3,000 Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians were on their way to protect the Mussulmans.

If this be correct, and I am inclined to believe it, I fear we may hear of a fearful state of things, as it will be very difficult to prevent these Bashi-Bozouks and Circassians from taking revenge on every Bulgarian Christian they meet.

Should you approve of it, I will at once proceed with all possible speed to Kustendji, or its vicinity, to make inquiries, and do my best in urging what authorities I may meet to give their attention and endeavour to prevent what is feared.

Should your Excellency be able to spare a despach-boat to take me to the spot, I could forward to you what I may learn and do on the subject, and its presence would inspire much confidence among the Christians, and probably prevent panics, which the marauders always turn to account.

I will afterwards proceed to the nearest possible point to Rustchuk and Shumla for the same purpose.

I will venture to respectfully add that this subject is well worthy of our serious attention.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. READE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 206.

Vice-Consul Stokes to Mr. Layard.

Sulina, June 23, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE now the honour to inform you that the Russians crossed the Danube yesterday at Tultcha and Matchin. The Ottoman authorities, both civil and military, at once deserted the town of Tultcha. The Governor, Fahir Bey, went by land to Kustendjie. The Russians are expected to arrive at Tultcha to-night. The Consuls residing at Tultcha have formed a guard for their own protection. The Ottoman iron-clad and gun-boat stationed between this place and Tultcha has returned to Sulina. At 4 P.M. to-day a Russian steamer hove in sight of the port, and the Turkish

fleet, consisting of five iron-clads and a corvette, after a long delay, started in pursuit of her; but with what result is not yet known. All quiet here at present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) O. STOKES.

No. 207.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 723. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 4, 1877.

GENERAL SIR COLLINGWOOD DICKSON having had occasion to call yesterday upon Mahmoud Damat Pasha, his Highness spoke to him upon the present position of Turkey. M. Marinitch, who acted as interpreter, has given me the inclosed Memorandum of what Mahmoud Damat Pasha said.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 207.

Mémorandum.

APRÈS avoir donné des nouvelles de la guerre au Général Dickson, son Altesse Damad Mahmoud Pacha s'est exprimé en ces termes:—

"L'Europe nous a abandonnés; nous nous trouvons seuls et forcés de nous défendre contre notre puissant ennemi, qui a envahi notre territoire en Europe et en Asie avec l'intention de nous détruire.

"Par la correspondance échangée entre Lord Derby et le Prince Gortchakow on voit que l'Angleterre ne prendra pas part à la guerre, à moins que ses intérêts ne soient lésés et cette éventualité se produirait si Constantinople, l'Egypte, et le Golfe Persique étaient menacés.

"Il faut savoir que nous ne nous considérons pas en sureté en gardant Constantinople seulement. Nous nous défendrons de notre mieux pour sauvegarder nos droits et notre territoire, et si l'Angleterre viendra à notre aide, nous pourrons nous venger de notre ennemi commun; sans cela il faudra nous contenter d'être sur la défensive et repousser les Russes là où ils se montrent. Nous avons confiance en Dieu et dans la justice de notre cause. Cette guerre ne ressemble pas aux précédentes; l'ennemi s'attache à lui donner un caractère religieux. Quelle faute avons-nous commise en naissant Musulmans? Notre cause pourrait devenir par trop sympathique aux Musulmans du monde entier!"

(Signé) MARINISC.

Le 3 Juillet, 1877.

No. 208.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 724.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 4, 1877.

I HAVE learnt to-day, from a trustworthy source, that the arrival of Her Majesty's fleet at Besika Bay has had a very good effect upon the Christian population of Constantinople, who look upon its presence at the entrance to the Dardanelles as affording them much additional security.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 209.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 725.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 4, 1877.

THE German Ambassador has received information that a band of Circassians, having attempted to pillage some villages inhabited by natives of Wurtemberg, who have settled in the Dobrudcha, the latter raised barricades to defend themselves, and succeeded in beating off the marauders, who lost, it is said, fifteen of their number in killed and wounded. None of the Germans have, it appears, been killed.

Prince Reuss has brought this occurrence to the notice of the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 210.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 726.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 4, 1877.

I AM informed that the Armenian Patriarch has learnt that twenty-five Christian villages have been pillaged by the Kurds in the district of Van. The Porte has given orders that a sufficient number of troops are to be immediately sent for the protection of the population, and to put an end to the excesses of the Kurds.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 211.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 11.)

(No. 593. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Paris, July* 10, 1877.

THE Duc Decazes told me yesterday that, according to the latest accounts he had received, the Russian army in Armenia appeared to be recovering from its late defeats. He observed, however, on the other hand, that the French military authorities did not think well of the strategical position of the Russian army in Bulgaria, placed as it was between two Turkish armies of considerable strength—the one at Widdin, and the other at Shumla. Notwithstanding the diversion which the Roumanian troops appeared to be endeavouring to effect in the neighbourhood of Widdin, the French officers did not consider the Russian operations to have been altogether judicious.

The Duc Decazes proceeded to say that, as I knew, he had good reason to believe that a formal engagement between Russia and Austria would prevent the Russian troops entering Servia. But this engagement did not, he observed, extend to the independent army of Roumania; and the Servian part of the campaign against Turkey might be carried on by that army.

I observed to the Duke that if Roumania was to be treated as independent, she would stand alone, face to face with Austria, who could have no difficulty in putting an immediate stop to her attempts to enter Servia.

But, the Duke asked, is it so very certain that Austria would wish to stop them? Might she not be glad of the pretext they would give her for occupying Servia on her own side? A very probable consequence of the presence of a Roumanian army in Servia might be an alliance between the two Principalities and a Declaration by Servia of her independence. Would this be altogether disagreeable to Count Andrassy? The Count was believed to have promised the Emperor Francis Joseph that matters should eventually be so arranged as to make an Austrian occupation of Servia feasible. Would not a declaration of independence by Servia furnish him with a means of keeping his promise, and disarming opposition from Hungary? Might he not argue with the Magyars in the following way:—"You admit that the establishment of a large independent Slav State on the frontier of the kingdom would be very dangerous. Servia alone could never be formidable; but her independence would form an attraction to the neighbouring provinces, and tend to her aggrandizement. The only

effectual way to counteract the danger is for Austria to be beforehand with Servia, and to occupy those provinces herself."

The Duke went on to say that having once occupied Bosnia, Austria would have no difficulty in finding reasons for taking permanent possession of it. He believed that the phrase made use of in the arrangement between Austria and Russia was that Austria should keep Bosnia only in case Turkey should be unable to keep it; but how was Turkey to prove her ability to keep it, if it were already in the hands of Austrian troops?

I asked the Duke whether he had strong reasons for supposing that Austria was so very much bent upon territorial aggrandizement of this kind.

His Excellency answered that the Court party in Austria was certainly eager to do something. He did not know that territorial aggrandizement was in itself a special object of their desires; but undoubtedly they did most earnestly desire that Austria should find some means of putting herself forward, of showing that she is of some account in the world. Count Andrassy himself did not share these feelings, and he was too dependent upon his relations with Germany to be disposed to be adventurous; but at the same time he must wish to be able to keep his promises to his own Emperor, and to satisfy the influential party at Court.

In my despatches Nos. 473 and 474 of the 7th ultimo, I had the honour to report to your Lordship that the Duc Decazes had told me that he had received positive information that a written engagement existed between Russia and Austria by which Austria was authorized to take possession of Turkish Croatia and Bosnia in certain contingencies.

Your Lordship may remember that on that occasion the Duc Decazes observed to me that a desire to acquire territory explained a great deal that would otherwise be unintelligible in the policy of Austria since the first outbreak of the insurrection in Herzegovina. His Excellency spoke very much in the same strain yesterday.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 212.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 594. Very Confidential.) *Paris, July 10, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me very confidentially this morning that Prince Gortchakow had just sent him a message saying that England and Austria were planning an offer of mediation between Russia and Turkey, and that the offer was likely to be made formally by them in a very short time.

The Duke said that he supposed that Prince Gortchakow's object in sending him this message was to stir him up to urge on this plan of mediation and to lose no time in putting forward a claim on the part of France to take part in it.

I asked the Duke whether it was quite certain that Prince Gortchakow desired that an offer of mediation should be made and accepted at the present moment.

The Duke answered that it was quite certain, that there could not be a doubt of it. The Prince was not uninfluenced by personal considerations. He would have been able to bear with equanimity a war carried on at a distance, but at this moment he was suffering discomforts and inconveniences in his own person, and was in close proximity to the horrors of war. Nothing could suit him so well as a Congress at Geneva during the remainder of the summer.

The Duc Decazes did not seem quite certain that an offer of mediation would be equally acceptable to other Russian statesmen, or to the Emperor Alexander himself. He observed that the effect of the present state of things upon the Emperor's susceptible and impressionable character caused serious uneasiness.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 213.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 254.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 10, 1877.*

INFORMATION has been received that Redif Pasha, Minister of War, died suddenly at Shumla, but I do not know cause of his death. Of course treachery, in which Russia is concerned, will be suspected, and impression produced will be very bad.

No. 214.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 255.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 11, 1877.*

PORTE informs me that the Russians have been beaten at Plevna, which has been reoccupied by the Turks, and civil authorities reinstated.

No. 215.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, July 11, 1877.*

PRINCE of Montenegro has invited (me) to visit him at Orialuka, and I am leaving now by Spuz. Shall be there to-morrow.

Sent to Constantinople.

No. 216.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 256.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 11, 1877.*

IT appears that death of Redif Pasha, which I telegraphed yesterday, was false. It was sent me by the Austrian Ambassador, and consequently I believed it.

No. 217.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, July 11, 1877.*

I AM assured, with reference to a newspaper report on the subject, that Baron Calice, who is going to England to visit his wife's family, is not charged with any Mission to Her Majesty's Government.

No. 218.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 11.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, July 11, 1877.*

THE information contained in your Lordship's telegram of yesterday respecting the Suling branch of the Danube has also been received at the Foreign Office here, but has not yet been submitted to Count Andrassy. The Director of the Commercial Department, who is of opinion that some steps should be taken in the interest of the navigation, says that they must depend on how far the channel can be included in the neutralized works of the Commission, to which I answered, as the Commission have doubled the depth of the river, the operation should apparently be included in its works. An early communication of the views of Her Majesty's Government on this

point and on the measures to be taken to remedy the mischief already done and to prevent its being continued will be thankfully received here.

No. 219.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 283.) *Foreign Office, July* 11, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Russian Ambassador has spoken to me on the subject of the regulations issued by Her Majesty's Government with regard to the maintenance and observance of the neutrality of this country in maritime questions during the war between Russia and Turkey.

His Excellency inquired how far the Government would be disposed to extend this neutrality in regard to commerce and to the exportation from British ports, either by British subjects or foreigners, of the articles generally known as contraband of war, and he asked what was the legislation in force in this country respecting such matters.

I have informed Count Schouvaloff, in reply, that the practice of Great Britain as a neutral State with respect to articles which may be deemed to be contraband of war is governed by the general law of nations. Her Majesty's Government have always maintained that, by the law of nations, the neutral shipper of goods which may be deemed to be contraband of war commits no offence against his own Sovereign, and that a neutral State is not bound to restrain or punish its subjects who seek to carry such goods across the seas to a belligerent, the only penalty for so doing being the seizure and condemnation of the goods if intercepted by the enemy during their transport.

The powers vested in the Executive by the Foreign Enlistment Act, passed in 1870 after much careful consideration, were, I said, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, amply sufficient for the enforcement of all the duties and obligations of neutrality which the law of nations can require.

The existence of war inflicts sufficiently onerous burdens on neutral commerce, and Her Majesty's Government had no intention of adding to them by the imposition of restrictions on the trade of this country in excess of the recognized practice of neutral States.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 220.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 12.)

Constantinople, le 11 *Juillet*, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

D'APRÈS des télégrammes reçus à la Sublime Porte, une division Russe, arrivée le sept aux villages de Kestan et de Bélovan, a désarmé les habitants Musulmans et a distribué leurs armes aux Bulgares. Puis il a été procédé contre la population Musulmane de la même manière que précédemment, c'est-à-dire par le massacre des hommes, des femmes, et des enfants, et par l'incendie de leurs habitations. Ce qui précède fait croire que les Russes ont érigé en système l'extermination des Musulmans sur le passage de leurs troupes, et que nos malheureux coreligionnaires doivent s'attendre au traitement le plus horrible et le plus barbare de la part d'un ennemi qui s'annonçait hautement comme le défenseur des droits de l'humanité et comme le protecteur impartial de toutes nos populations. Nous ne pouvons douter que l'Europe ne soit indignée et profondément émue au récit de pareilles atrocités.

No. 221.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 12.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, July* 11, 1877.

WELLESLEY writes from Zimnicea 9th July:—

"Tirnova was captured by Prince Eugene Leuchtenberg's brigade belonging to General Gourkhos' cavalry command, and two Cossack regiments. Position appears to have been turned by the Russians, who captured Turkish camp, train, and a quantity of ammunition. Turks, said to have numbered 7,000, with one battery, forced to retire on Shumla instead of Balkan, as they intended. Russian infantry expected at Tirnova to-day and further advance to-morrow. Czarevitch marching on Rustchuk with 12th and 13th corps, former commanded by Grand Duke Vladimir. 9th corps marching on Nicopoli.

"Advanced squadrons of Czarevitch's cavalry said to have had successful affair with Turkish cavalry in superior force at a village beyond Bjela.

"Emperor still at Zimnicea. Grand Duke Nicholas advancing along Tirnova road."

No. 222.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tiflis, July* 11, 1877.

TEN thousand Persian troops are at Khoi. Frankini still at Teheran. Muscovite loss between 27th ultimo and 1st instant near Soukoum Kale was 2,500.

No. 223.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 12.)

(No. 258.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 12, 1877.

SIR A. KEMBALL telegraphs, dated Tuesday:—

"Russians retired with all their force to Kurucdere last night; it is supposed to await arrival of expected reinforcements. It is ascertained that they commenced the campaign with only 50,000 men from Batoum to Bayazid."

No. 224.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 297.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 12, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 617 of the 15th ultimo, forwarding copy of a protest from the Managing Director of the "Black Sea Telegraph Company (Limited)," against the suspension of telegraphic communication with Russia by the Company's cable, and stating that you had declined to present the same to the Porte without instructions from Her Majesty's Government.

With reference to this case I have to observe that in this country power is reserved to the Crown by Act of Parliament, in any public emergency, to take possession of any telegraph lines, compensation being paid for the loss consequent on such a proceeding.

It appears that the Black Sea Telegraph Company (a British Company) omitted to stipulate for the payment of compensation in the event of the exercise by the Porte of the power which is reserved to it by Article 8 of the Convention of 1873 of stopping the line. According to the letter of Mr. Serpos, the Company, while admitting the right of the Porte to stop the working of the line, desire to protest, through your Excellency, against the exercise of this right without payment of compensation.

The question apparently turns on the construction of the contract with the Company, and the latter bound themselves to submit all questions with the Porte to Turkish law and Turkish Tribunals.

Their protest is a mere assertion of a legal right which the Porte may hereafter recognize. They have suffered as yet no legal injury or denial of justice, and if they think it desirable to present this protest for the protection of their alleged right to compensation, it appears to Her Majesty's Government that they should do so without the intervention of your Excellency.

The original inclosure in your despatch No. 617 is returned herewith. It appears to be a letter from Mr. Serpos, Manager of the Company at Constantinople, and not, as stated in your despatch, a letter from Mr. Fuller.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 225.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 298.) *Foreign Office, July 12, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 660, Confidential, of the 25th ultimo, on the subject of an alleged understanding between Russia, Austria, and Servia for the passage of Russian troops through Servian territory; and in reply I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held to M. Christich, the Servian Agent at Constantinople, as reported in your aforesaid despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 226.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 301.) *Foreign Office, July 12, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 673 of the 26th ultimo, respecting the murder of three Christians near Balukhissar, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the steps which you took to induce the Porte to bring to justice the perpetrators of this outrage.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 227.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 302.) *Foreign Office, July 12, 1877.*

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 672 of June 26, I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve your having represented to Safvet Pasha that the Porte would do well to treat the Miridite prisoners, Captain Gion, and the priest, Don Primo, with leniency.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 228.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 303.) *Foreign Office, July 12, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 666 of the 25th ultimo, reporting a conversation which your Excellency had had with Safvet Pasha respecting the state of affairs in Crete, and stating that you had urged upon his Excellency the importance of satisfying any reasonable demands which the Christian inhabitants of the island

might make, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve your language on that occasion, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 229.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 317.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 12, 1877.*

WITH reference to Mr. Eldridge's despatch of June 28 to your Excellency, copy of which has been forwarded to me from Beyrout, I have to request that you will call the attention of the Porte to the dismissal of the Kaïmakam of Lattakia through the influence, as is alleged, of the fanatical party, on the late Governor-General of Syria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 230.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 13.*)

(No. 170. Political.)

My Lord, *Bucharest, July 2, 1877.*

I BEG to transmit to your Lordship a translation of the message of Prince Charles on the closing of the extraordinary Session of the Roumanian Legislature.

Should, however, this Government decide upon sending the Roumanian army across the Danube, it is to be presumed that the pleasure of the Chambers will be taken and the necessary credits voted for the expenditure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 230.

Message of Prince Charles on closing Roumanian Legislature.

"Messieurs les Députés,

"JE vous avais convoqué, en Session extraordinaire, à la veille des événements Européens qui ont éclaté à nos frontières et qui, bientôt après, sont arrivés à se développer à l'intérieur même de notre territoire.

"Notre patrie a été entraînée dans le grand tourbillon. La Turquie, au lieu de tenir compte de notre position difficile, de nos efforts constants et des sacrifices que nous avions faits pendant une année entière pour maintenir notre neutralité, nous a traités en ennemis, bombardant, sur toute la ligne du Danube, nos villes ouvertes, brûlent nos villages, dévastant les propriétés et les biens privés, et massacrant nos innocentes populations rurales.

"En conséquence de cet état de guerre, créé par la Turquie elle-même, vous, Messieurs, véritables représentants de la volonté et des besoins nationaux, vous avez répondu aux provocations de la Sublime Porte en proclamant la rupture des liens de la Roumanie avec l'Empire des Sultans.

"Constatant l'impérieuse nécessité de nous assurer l'avenir, de soustraire notre pays à la solidarité d'actes et de fautes auxquels il serait étranger, de constituer notre pays en un Etat indépendant et seul responsable de ses propres actes, comptant sur les sentiments d'équité et le bienveillant appui des Puissances Garantes, vous avez, le jour du 9 Mai, proclamé l'indépendance complète de la Roumanie. Vous ne vous êtes pas arrêtés à la simple expression de ce grand vœu national. Vous avez donné à mon Gouvernement tous les moyens nécessaires pour que, même les armes à la main, nous puissions transformer ce vœu en réalité. Vous avez donné à mes Ministres un concours patriotique et constant, pour qu'il pût satisfaire aux besoins du pays.

"Bien que votre activité ait été réclamée et donnée dans une Session qui a duré deux mois accomplis, mon Gouvernement ne se serait pas privé, même à présent, de

votre co-opération, plus nécessaire que jamais au pouvoir exécutif, en raison des circonstances exceptionnelles où nous nous trouvons; mais nous devons tenir compte de vos occupations et de vos besoins personnels.

"C'est pour cela que je me sépare provisoirement de vous, bien sûr qu'à la première occasion qui réclamera vos conseils et vos décisions, vous ne manquerez pas de répondre immédiatement à mon appel.

"Dans cette assurance, je vous exprime, au nom du pays, ma reconnaissance pour les grands actes nationaux que vous avez accomplis, pour les besoins publics que vous avez satisfaits, pour le concours éclairé que vous avez donné à mon Gouvernement. Et, en vous disant: 'au revoir en des temps meilleurs et plus cubnes pour notre chère Roumanie,' en vertu de l'Article 93 de la Constitution, je déclare close la Session extraordinaire de la Chambre des Députés.

(Signé) "CHARLES."

No. 231.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 13.)

(No. 171. Political.)

Bucharest, July 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship a translation of the Proclamation of the Emperor of Russia to the populations in Bulgaria.

I have been told that the inclosed has emanated from the Chancery of Prince Gortchakow, but the style and tone rather lead me to suppose that Prince Tcherkasky may be the author.

Your Lordship will not fail to observe that the latter paragraphs of the Proclamation distinctly state that the Turkish authorities will be permanently replaced by Russian functionaries, and indeed, the latter are already installed in such villages in the Dobrudsha as may be now occupied by Russian forces.

Prince Tcherkasky is charged with the reorganization of Bulgaria, and is reported to have not less than 400 civil employés under his orders; whilst, from the language of Baron Jomini and others, it is to be distinctly understood that Bulgaria is to extend well into the districts where the massacres were enacted, and, consequently, far south of the Balkan.

Prince Vogoridas is regarded as the probable Prince, Governor, or whatever else may be the designation of the "head of the Bulgarian Administrative Power," and there is little doubt that the razing of the fortresses on the Danube also forms an indispensable feature in the Russian programme.

It is to be presumed that a nominal suzerainté may be retained to the Porte on paper, but recent events in this country and in Servia indicate the practical value of relations of this nature, and there is no reason to anticipate that, in the case of Bulgaria, they would be more solid or durable.

All this might have been staved off, had the Porte accepted the proposals of the Conference, but matters have gone so far that it is difficult to see how, or at what limit, the execution of the Russian programme could now be arrested.

In this manner, while nominally maintaining the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, a blow is being inflicted almost as serious as if Bulgaria were to become a province of Russia.

Europe, moreover, and public opinion in England having recognized with such unwise precipitation, that Bulgaria is to be reconstituted in a purely Christian sense, any present remonstrance would involve an inconsistency not easy to rebut.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 231.

Manifesto of the Czar to the Bulgarians.

AU moment où les troupes Russes franchissaient le Danube, Sa Majesté l'Empereur de Russie adressait aux Bulgares le Manifeste suivant:—

"Bulgares:

"Mon armée a passé le Danube. Elle entre dans votre pays, où elle a combattu,

à plusieurs reprises, pour adoucir le sort déplorable des Chrétiens de la Péninsule Balcanique.

"Avec une immuable persévérance, suivant nos anciennes traditions historiques, recueillant toujours de nouvelles forces dans l'idée persévérante de tout le peuple Orthodoxe Russe, mes ancêtres réussirent jadis, par leur influence et leurs armes, à diverses époques, à consolider la position des Serbes et des Roumains, et à créer pour ces peuples une nouvelle vie politique.

"Le temps et les circonstances n'ont pas changé la sympathie que la Russie a toujours eue pour ses coreligionnaires de l'Orient, et maintenant, avec la même bienveillance et le même amour, elle s'adresse aux membres nombreux de la vaste famille Chrétienne de la Péninsule Balcanique.

"Par mon ordre, ma valeureuse armée, conduite par mon bien-aimé frère le Grand Duc Nicolas Nicolaievitch, est chargée de conserver pour toujours votre nationalité et de consacrer ces droits sacrés, sans lesquels il n'est même pas possible de penser à un développement pacifique et régulier de votre vie civique. Ces droits, vous les avez acquis, non par la force d'une résistance armée, mais au prix bien cher de souffrances séculaires et du sang des martyrs, au prix des maux que vous avez endurés si longtemps, vous et vos parents et vos ancêtres.

"Habitants de la Bulgarie! La mission de la Russie est de créer, non de détruire. La Russie est appelé par la Divine Providence à rapprocher et à pacifier toutes les populations et toutes les religions de la Bulgarie, là même où vivent des hommes de diverses origines et de diverses religions. A l'avenir, les armées Russes mettront un terme à tout oppression dont pourrait être victime un Chrétien. Pas un cheveu ne tombera de la tête de l'un de vous sans que le coupable soit puni. Il ne sera pas enlevé à l'un de vous la moindre parcelle de son bien, soit par un Musulman soit par un autre, sans que l'auteur de cet acte en rende un compte rigoureux.

"Toute infraction attirera le châtiment mérité, et cela sans pitié. La vie, la liberté, l'honneur, la fortune de tous les Chrétiens, à quelque rite qu'ils appartiennent, seront également protégés.

"Nous ne serons pas conduits par un sentiment de vengeance, mais par la conscience d'une sévère équité, par la tendance à créer graduellement la justice et le bon ordre, là où, jusqu'à présent, a régné seulement un arbitraire sauvage.

"Quant à vous, Musulmans de la Bulgarie, je vous adresse un avis salutaire. C'est avec douleur que je me rappelle que beaucoup d'entre vous ont commis récemment des cruautés et des crimes contre les populations Chrétiennes non protégées de la Péninsule Balcanique. Le monde ne saurait oublier ces crimes affreux. Les autorités Russes cependant ne puniront pas en vous tous les crimes de quelques-uns de vos coreligionnaires.

"Ils seront livrés à des tribunaux équitables, réguliers et sans haine, ces malfaiteurs que votre Gouvernement a connus et dont les crimes cependant sont restés impunis, mais eux seuls leur seront livrés. Pour vous, reconnaissez, d'un cœur pur, la justice divine qui s'accomplit définitivement sur vous. Courbez-vous, avec humilité, devant la sainte volonté de Dieu.

"Soumettez-vous, sans conditions, aux légitimes demandes des autorités qui seront constituées quand arrivera mon armée. Exécutez leurs ordres sans opposition. Devenez des citoyens pacifiques de la société, qui est prête à vous offrir, à vous aussi, tous les biens d'une vie civile, établie sur des bases régulières. Votre religion ne sera point atteinte; votre vie et votre fortune, la vie et l'honneur de vos familles, seront religieusement respectés.

"Vous traversez des jours mémorables pour vous. L'heure de votre délivrance du joug inique des Musulmans a sonné. Donnez maintenant à l'univers entier, qui a les yeux fixés sur vous, l'exemple de l'amour Chrétien. Oubliez vos anciennes haines domestiques. Respectez les droits de chaque nationalité; et, comme frères de religion, unissez-vous dans un commun sentiment de fraternité et d'amour, sans lequel on ne peut rien édifier de durable. Ralliez-vous fortement à l'ombre du drapeau de la Russie, dont les plis victorieux ont flotté si souvent sur le Danube et les Balcans. En contribuant au succès des armées Russes et en leur donnant tout votre appui, par tous les moyens dont vous disposez, vous servirez votre propre cause, celle de la régénération durable du pays Bulgare.

"A mesure que nos drapeaux avanceront, les autorités Turques seront remplacées par une administration régulière. A cette administration seront appelés à participer immédiatement d'une manière active les citoyens loyaux, sous la direction des autorités organisées dans ce but. Quant aux jeunes légions Bulgares, elles serviront de base à la force Bulgare, destinée à maintenir le bon ordre et la sécurité.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

"Servez votre patrie avec zèle et honnêteté, et en agissant ainsi avec abnégation et sans partialité, vous prouverez à l'univers, qui vous regarde, que vous méritez le sort que la Russie vous prépare depuis tant d'années et au prix de tant de peines.

"Obéissez aux autorités Russes et accomplissez exactement ses ordres. De là dépend votre force et votre salut.

"Je prie humblement le Très-Haut de nous donner de vaincre les ennemis du Christianisme et de verser sur notre juste cause ses saintes bénédictions.

(Signé) "ALEXANDRE."

No. 231A.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 13.)

(No. 84. Political.)

Belgrade, July 3, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Servian National Assembly ("Skoupstchina") has met at Kragouiévatz, and the Prince opened the session with a speech last night.

The majority are said to be favourable to peace and to the present Ministers.

It is reported that a Roumanian force has crossed the Danube at some place above Widdin, a little distance from the Servian frontier.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 231B.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 13.)

(No. 86. Political.)

Belgrade, July 4, 1877.

My Lord,

IT is now possible to estimate with some precision the immediate results of Prince Milan's visit to the Imperial headquarters at Ploiesti, and I believe that one may say that this result has been so far satisfactory that it has contributed to soothe for a time any existing disposition here to renew an appeal to arms.

The language of the Emperor left no doubt on the mind of the Prince of Servia that His Majesty had engagements with the Emperor of Austria which would make it highly inconvenient that Servia should again rush into hostilities with Turkey, and that at any rate the Prince must not rely on any pecuniary assistance or active co-operation on the part of Russia.

As to the future, His Majesty is reported to have made some allusion that the position and attitude past and present of this Slav Principality would be favourably considered when peace was negotiated; but these words, whatever they may have been, appear to contain a very vague promise, though of course they are made the most of here and will be turned into political capital by the Ministers before the assembled Deputies.

I continue of opinion that there is no danger of Servian hostilities for some time to come, and certainly less since the Prince's visit than there was before.

The most prominent evidence has been given by it, however, to the open assumption by Russia of a sort of protectorate over provinces in which the Treaty of Paris had substituted the collective guarantee of the Great Powers to that of the Czar alone.

In connection with what is intended to be effected in Bulgaria, and of the persistent disregard of the Sultan's suzerainty in Servia, there is abundant evidence of the intentions of Russia and sufficient cause of uneasiness for Austria.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 231C.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 13.)

(No. 87. Political.)

Belgrade, July 5, 1877.

My Lord,

SINCE the visit which Prince Milan paid to Bucharest, some persons here are of opinion that some secret understanding has been come to between Servia and Roumania, and that the crossing of the forces commanded by Prince Charles in the direction of Widdin will be the signal for mutual co-operation against Turkey.

I have seen nothing hitherto to confirm any suspicion of this kind. M. Ristitch has told me, and Prince Milan confirmed the same statement to Prince Wrede, that they both of them begged of Prince Gortchakow to use his influence with the Roumanian Government to prevent their attempting to cross the Danube anywhere in too close proximity to the Servian frontier.

M. Ristitch has told me on several occasions that were a disaster to befall a Roumanian force, and if any of them were to seek refuge on Servian territory, they would have to be disarmed, but that the Turks could not be allowed to pursue them on the territory of this Principality.

It is on that account that the movements of Roumania are watched with interest and apprehension here.

From what reaches me of the disposition of Osman Pasha at Widdin, and of the feelings of the Turkish garrison there, I am inclined to fear that he would take advantage of any such opportunity to consider the Servians as enemies; but were this to happen, they would certainly plead that they were acting purely on the defensive.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 232.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 13.)

(No. 89. Political.)

Belgrade, July 6, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram of the 3rd instant, I have now the honour to report that it seems that the Roumanian force which was said to have crossed the Danube appears not to have yet accomplished this.

It is confidently hoped at Belgrade that whenever this is effected, it will be done not over Servian territory, but lower down the river.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 233.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 13.)

(No. 260.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, July 12, 1877.

SIR A. KEMBALL telegraphs from Kars on the 8th, that after twenty days' bombardment, doing little or no damage, Russians had apparently ceased firing on that day. They were supposed to have sent, he says, their guns back to Kerreckdee. Their batteries were about 4,000 yards off north-east front. Kars is presumed impregnable by assault, and believed amply supplied with provisions and ammunition. Turkish Commander-in-chief talks of remaining some time in the same position, and has ordered more ammunition from Erzeroom for Kars.

No. 234.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 13.)

(No. 261.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 13, 1877.

FOLLOWING received to-day from Bagdad:—

"The evacuation of the island in the Euphrates is complete. No building upon it."

No. 235.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 13.)

(Telegraphic.) *Danilograd, July* 13, 1877.

PRINCE NICHOLAS has received me most kindly. During conversations clearly understood to be private, his Highness informed me that his sense of honour forced him to continue hostilities with hope of retaining Turkish troops in Albania, but he said Russia a few days ago advised him to seek a suspension of hostilities, as his people needed repose.

I urged his Highness to reconsider his determination, and though his Highness promised nothing, I am not without hope that he will be guided by the alleged advice of his ally.

Not sent to Constantinople.

No. 236.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 13.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, July* 13, 1877.

GENERAL TERGOUKASOW has succeeded in relieving the Russian garrison of Bayazid after defeating the Turks.

No. 237.

Lord Tenterden to Sir J. Stokes.

(Confidential.) *Foreign Office, July* 13, 1877.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to transmit to you herewith a copy of a telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Galatz, relative to the condition of the Sulina branch of the Danube, and also a copy of a telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna on the same subject;* and I am to request that you will take these papers into your consideration and favour his Lordship with any observations which you may have to make upon them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 238.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 31. Political.) *Adrianople, June* 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the copy of a Report, with its inclosures, which I have to-day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to the state of this vilayet.

With reference to the conduct of the Circassians, I may further mention that within the last few days some 600 of their horsemen have come in from the neighbouring districts in separate detachments, and 300 of their number have gone on to the seat of war. Their behaviour has been upon the whole most orderly, and Christians from the interior assure me that in the villages on the line of march these men have given no occasion of complaint.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

* Nos. 181 and 218.

Inclosure 1 in No. 238.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, June* 30, 1877.

I REGRET to inform your Excellency that disorders are reported to be on the increase in many parts of this vilayet. Although in the case of the Caza of Demotica statements to that effect have been proved by Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis to be untrue, there is, I fear, some foundation for them in other instances.

The inclosed Reports from Mr. Vice-Consul Odoni of Gallipoli, and Mr. Consular Agent Dussi of Rodosto, tend, especially the latter, to confirm the less favourable view of matters. I have brought the substance of both these Reports to the notice of the Vali, who informs me he has taken the necessary steps with regard to the occurrences they mention.

I would, however, here observe that there hardly seems to be sufficient warrant for the belief expressed by Mr. Dussi, that the outrages he reports are attributable to fanatical motives. The Christians offer to evil-doers both the richest and the easiest prey; they are naturally, therefore, the chief sufferers. It is universally admitted that the Circassians, who are at present chiefly concerned in the acts complained of, are even remarkably free from religious prejudices. The fact that the offences they commit are offences against property rather than against persons, goes to confirm the opinion that they are actuated by covetous rather than by fanatical motives. As a rule the Circassian is not prone to shed blood; and whilst addicted to theft, especially in the form of cattle and horse-stealing, he is as ready to rob his co-religionists as the Christians when he has a chance of doing so with impunity.

I regret to have to report the following outrage which has occurred in this sandjak. On the night of the 22nd instant a party of Bulgarians were conveying wine in carts near the village of Seymen, twelve hours from Adrianople towards Philippopolis. They were there met by a party of Turks, one of whom snatched and carried off a small barrel of wine. Three Bulgarians followed him, claiming their property. The Turk, turning upon his pursuers, killed one and wounded the two others. Another Turk and a Bulgarian, who was with the Turkish party, then came up, and they and the assassin, knowing they were recognized, in order to prevent denouncement, dispatched the two wounded Bulgarians, and cut off the heads of all the three. In the morning, however, the other Bulgarians picked up on the scene of the tragedy a shoe and the sheath of a dagger, which led to the identification of the assassins. One of the survivors of the Bulgarian party having reported the circumstances to me on the following evening, I brought them to the knowledge of the Vali. Through his Excellency's energetic action the persons concerned in this triple murder were immediately discovered and arrested. All the three have confessed their participation in the crime.

The present unsatisfactory condition of the country is but the natural result of the withdrawal of the police force from the vilayet, a result which I anticipated when reporting that measure in my despatch to your Excellency of May 10. The only wonder is, indeed, that the evil effects of it have not made themselves more extensively felt.

The Vali informs me that, on receiving the order to send off the mounted police, his Excellency made representations in the above sense to the Porte, and he pointed out the impracticability of borrowing men from the Mustahfiz troops in garrison, as desired by the Porte, and detaching them on police duty to the rural districts, without throwing into confusion the organization of that corps, which must necessarily be held ready for active service in the field at the shortest notice. The Vali and the Supreme Council of the Vilayet have more than once represented to the Minister of the Interior that they will not be responsible for the maintenance of the public peace unless the Porte will authorize the formation of a regular police force similar to that which has been withdrawn. Yet the Government still withholds its sanction to this measure so urgently needed, and which would involve the comparatively trifling outlay of 2,000 Turkish pounds a-year. The injustice of this treatment is the more flagrant

since the vilayet has expended no less than 200,000 Turkish pounds in war contributions.

I respectfully beg to express the hope that your Excellency will see fit to support the representations of the Vali and the Council of the Vilayet in this matter.

In the meanwhile, it is satisfactory to know that some success has attended the mission on which the Mufti of Adrianople is now engaged, agreeably to the suggestion which, with your Excellency's sanction, I made to the Grand Vizier when at Constantinople, of making a tour among the Circassian villages, and exhorting that unruly people to refrain from acts which would increase the embarrassments of the Porte. The accounts which I receive from impartial private sources agree with those coming from the Mufti himself, as to the salutary effects of this appeal in the districts which he has visited so far.

Upon the whole, considering that the country is at war, that the mounted police force has been withdrawn, and that the rural classes are suffering from the pressure of military requirements, it could hardly be expected that the state of things should be better.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 238.

Vice-Consul Odoni to Consul Blunt.

Gallipoli, le 18 *Juin*, 1877.

(Extrait.)

IL y a maintenant quelque temps que cinq brigands se présentèrent dans une bergerie du village Chrétien de Beendikeui. Le fils du propriétaire de la bergerie s'enfuit, et, en arrivant au village, informa son père de la présence des brigands à la bergerie. Celui-ci sachant que trois zaptiés se trouvaient dans le village en route pour Pera, se fit un devoir de leur faire part de ce que son fils venait de lui rapporter. Ces zaptiés, à peu près ivres, voulurent aller arrêter les brigands, et étant suit prirent avec eux divers villageois armés et le fils du propriétaire de la bergerie pour leur servir de guide. Les brigands quoique surpris tuèrent un zaptié et désarmèrent les deux autres. Ces trois zaptiés armés de fusils Rimington n'ont pas tiré un seul coup de fusil.

La mort d'un zaptié provoqua une enquête qui ait pour résultat l'arrestation du propriétaire de la bergerie et de son fils sous l'inculpation d'avoir attiré les zaptiés dans une embûche. (Il est à noter que ces zaptiés, arrivés le soir même à Beendikeui, en route pour Séna, ne devaient pas aller passer la nuit à Beendikeui, et qu'ils allèrent dans le but de chercher des boissons. Le fils du propriétaire de la bergerie ne savait même pas que les zaptiés étaient dans le village.)

Les interrogatoires ont été faits. Avant-hier j'ai demandé au Gouverneur si ces deux personnes étaient encore en prison. Il m'a répondu en faisant appeler devant moi le premier commis du Conseil de Justice, qui lui apprit qu'elles étaient encore en prison, et qu'elles paraissent coupables du fait qu'on leur impute, mais qu'il n'y avait pas encore eu de jugement. Le père se plaint au juge en disant que s'il n'informait pas la police de la présence des brigands on l'aurait emprisonné comme receleur et qu'il est emprisonné actuellement par ce qu'il est arrivé malheur aux zaptiés. Il a demandé quelle conduite il devra tenir à l'avenir.

Inclosure 3 in No. 238.

Consular Agent Dussi to Consul Blunt.

Rodosto, le 20 *Juin*, 1877.

(Extrait.)

JE suis peiné de vous dire que la tranquillité publique, dans ma circonscription, a laissé à désirer depuis le départ des souvaris (gendarmes à cheval). Le brigandage est devenu une véritable plaie pour nos campagnes. Il ne se passe pas de jour que nous n'ayons quelque fait regrettable à relever. Vols, homicides, blessures, coups, attentats à la pudeur avec violence, &c., sont à l'ordre du jour.

Hier encore, les habitants de Yénikeui, situé à une heure de Rodosto, vinrent porter plainte par devant les autorités, qu'une bande de Circassiens, entrée dans ce village, après les en avoir chassé à coups de fusils, enlevèrent tous ce qu'ils possédaient jusqu'à

leur linge. Par les cartouches qu'on a pu ramasser on voit que ces malfaiteurs étaient armés de Winchester.

Je n'en finirais pas si je devais vous détailler toutes les horreurs qui se commettent.

Chose à remarquer, les Chrétiens sont seuls les victimes de ces forfaits et il est à craindre qu'exaspérés ils ne se portent à des excès funestes des deux côtés et qui seraient préjudiciables aux intérêts de la Porte.

Malheureusement, je ne puis attribuer ces désordres, qu'il faudrait empêcher avant qu'ils ne prennent une grande extension, qu'au fanatisme des mauvais patriotes qui ne comprennent pas les embarras qu'ils peuvent susciter à leur Gouvernement.

No. 239.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 75. Political.)

Scutari, July 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Turkish military authorities in North Albania, as far as I can judge, would gladly avail themselves of any opportunity for opening negotiations for peace with Montenegro, so that they might abandon their present operations against the Principality.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 240.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 76. Political.)

Scutari, July 2, 1877.

My Lord,

ALTHOUGH the Turks still claim to have overcome Montenegro, I have observed for the last few days, from my intercourse with the authorities and others, that a great change has come over them with regard to the objects of the war against the Principality, which may have arisen either from the realization of the great losses in officers and men which they have to sustain, or from a true conception of the importance of the operations on the Danube.

Great anxiety has been expressed to me that some kind of intervention should take place to bring about an understanding between Turkey and Montenegro, and, as I am not certain that the feeling is not an echo of secret instructions sent from Constantinople, I have thought it my duty to telegraph to your Lordship my impression through Her Majesty's Consul at Ragusa.

I have little doubt that the Turks would be glad to consider Suleiman Pasha's march across Montenegro as a sufficient success to cover the honour of their arms, and that, if Prince Nicholas would make the first overtures for peace, he would secure it on very favourable terms.

I must, however, also report to your Lordship that the stream of Bashi Bazouks and irregulars arriving from Roumelia and Lower Albania still continues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 241.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 720.)

Therapia, July 5, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Italian Minister has addressed a note to the Porte, stating that, as Italian ship-owners had learnt that Greek vessels had received passes to enable them to trade with Russian ports in the Black Sea without interference on the part of the Turkish blockading squadron, he demanded that Italian vessels should enjoy the same right, according to the most-favoured-nation clause in the Treaty between Italy and Turkey.

Count Corti's note relates to the case of the ship belonging to Valiano and Company, referred to in my despatch No. 684 of the 27th ultimo. Whilst the Porte is compelled to admit that this vessel was furnished with the pass in question, through some unaccountable negligence or misconduct of some one connected with the Admiralty, it maintains that this was the only instance of such a pass having been given, and that it will not be repeated. None of my other colleagues have, as far as I am aware, taken any steps in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 242.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 732.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 5*, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 699 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kustendji respecting the state of the country since the Russians crossed the Danube.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 242.

Vice-Consul Sankey to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Kustendji, July* 2, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that up to the present time all is quiet in this town; all the shops are closed and a patrol of regular troops make the rounds day and night. All the troops from the different Dobrudcha stations are at Medjidieh ready for a retreat. A Turkish steamer brought up guns for arming the seven forts lately constructed, but the guns were re-embarked the next day. The steamer, with the guns, is still here, and every Mussulman family that could be crammed into her have been on board three days; but the authorities will not let her go before the arrival of another Turkish steamer. 160 sick and wounded soldiers were also embarked and the white flag struck off the hospital.

I can obtain no reliable information as to the Russian movements, but it seems certain that they are masters of the Turkish side of the river from a few miles below Tchernavoda to below Toulcha, and not a man to oppose them on their march to Varna. There has been no attempt at a rising on the part of the Bulgarians, as few of them were allowed to have any arms. They have been pillaged and ill-treated both by the authorities, Circassians, and Tartars, all their horses and carts taken away, and all their cattle and sheep driven off. All the villages between this place and Babadagh are deserted by the inhabitants. The Mussulman population went of its own accord, and the Germans and other settlers were made to remove forcibly. I have placed the few English families left in the Company's grain stores on the quay opposite the "Rapid," and have notified to the unmarried men and British subjects in general that I cannot be responsible for anything that may happen to them unless they place themselves in a position to allow of Captain Drummond's protecting them without scattering his men about the town for the protection of individuals, and thus risking uselessly the lives of his men.

I have now reliable information that the Russians are crossing daily from Braila in force.

On the 26th ultimo I received information that the Bulgarian village of Gargalik was in flames, and we could see columns of smoke even from Kustendji. I tried to get troops sent, as the place is only three hours' drive from here. I then telegraphed to Tahri Bey, the Mutessarif, now at Medjidieh, a very strongly worded protest, holding him responsible for any atrocities practised on the Christians. The answer was that he would send out cavalry immediately. An eye witness, who came in that evening, related that he had himself seen from fifty to sixty dead bodies and that the whole village was burnt to the ground.

On the morning of the 27th the Company's steam tug, with food and assistance, steamed up the coast, towing a boat with myself, an officer, and armed crew from the

"Rapid." We landed opposite Gargalik, and walked inland about four miles to the village. We saw the carcases of two horses that had been shot. We also found three Bulgars hidden in a dry well, and a woman and three little children hiding in among the vines. Every house had been ransacked and all the cattle driven off by a band of Circassians and Tartars from a village of the same name about half a mile away. There were no dead bodies, but the Bulgars told us when the Tartars fired at them they attempted to defend themselves for a short time and then fled and hid themselves in holes and amongst the growing corn. We were also informed that there were about 200 men, women, and children (some wounded) who had taken refuge on an island at Kara Osman, about twelve miles further up the coast. The Company's tug went up and took off about 200 persons. There were seven men wounded, one of whom has since died, and the others are in charge of the Company's physician, and likely to recover. I beg to inclose a statement of their case. According to the Bulgar account the Circassians were going away quite satisfied with carrying away the horses, when the Tartars persuaded them to come back as the Bulgars were hiding some treasure from them, and the Tartars began to fire on them. Out of 150 houses seven were burnt, as also the church. The authorities have made no attempt to arrest and punish the Tartars and Circassians, and it seems to be part of a general plan, and just now the Bulgars are considered fair prey, they being considered by Mussulmans as the chief cause of the war. Fahri Bey has also forcibly removed the inhabitants of the German villages between Medjidieh and Tchernavoda, and these poor people are now here depending on subscriptions for means of subsistence.

I have given what I could out of my purse, but as only the poorer sort of people are left here I expect this resource will fail unless I am authorized by your Excellency to disburse some small sums, if actually necessary, to keep them from starvation.

The information which I wrote to you about the landing and fighting at Hirsova, with all the attendant circumstances, was told me by Mr. H. Suter, Correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph," who had just returned from that place. I have since had proof that it was all false. He saw some droves of cattle and ran away as hard as he could and the Turks did the same. I am ashamed and sorry to have received from an Englishman, paid to transmit correct information, such ridiculous untruths.

Any further information I can obtain I will send you by Austrian steamer now loading here, and which will sail the day after to-morrow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. SANKEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 242.

Mr. Bolton to the Kaïmakam of Kustendjie.

Mr. Kaïmakam, *Kustendjie, June* $\frac{15}{27}$, 1877.

SIR, since last evening I have received the following men (Bulgars of Gargelick Chichuk) under my care:—

No. 1. Atanas Yovchoh. Two wounds of forehead, the bone being exposed in one of the wounds. Case is likely to occupy the space of ten days for its cure. Not a very serious case.

No. 2. Theodore Stoyan. Bullet wound under left arm, also bullet wound through the left thigh.* The former wound is the most serious, as it implicates the chest. This is a very dangerous case, and under the most favourable circumstances it will be four weeks before he can recover.

No. 3. Janas Georgit. Bullet wounds, two in number (point of entrance and point of exit). This is a very severe case and very dangerous, inasmuch as the chest is seriously implicated. His case will require a month for its cure.

N.B. The above cases were admitted under my care last evening, they having been brought from Gargelick in an open boat.

The following cases arrived from Gargelick this morning, in the Danube and Black Sea Railway Company's steamer "Evelyn:"—

No. 4. Georgis Jahno, an old man, bullet wounds (point of entry and exit) of right shoulder; both very severe, but not dangerous to a great degree. The shoulder blade-bone saved this man's life, by it diverting the bullet from entering the chest. He will require ten or twelve days for his cure.

* Bullet under arm still requires removal when he acquires more strength.

No. 5. Jalio Georgie. Two bullet wounds (entry and exit) of right leg. Case severe, but not dangerous. It will require ten or twelve days for his cure.

No. 6. Seitcho Georgie. Bullet wound of left shoulder, the ball being lodged in the shoulder and implicating the joint. Likely to prove a very serious and dangerous case. It will be at least a month or six weeks before he can be cured.

No. 7. Coli Dobrey. A severe bullet wound of left side of chest, the ball being lodged in the right side, low down, and behind the upper false ribs.* This is the most severe and dangerous case of all, especially as the ball traversed such a long distance. His case is certain to occupy the space of six weeks or two months before he can recover.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. W. BOLTON, M.B.,
Medical Officer.

June 28, 1877.

Case No. 6.—To-day I opened up this man's arm in hopes of extracting the bullet. I extracted some shattered bone and pieces of clothing, but the ball would not come, being so thoroughly impacted in the humerus. His case, therefore, is still very serious.

Kustendjie, June 28, 1877, 5 P.M.

Dear Sir,

THE foregoing, minus the note above, is a copy of the report given to the Kaimakam of this town yesterday. No. 7 case is still in very great danger, but I have still slight hopes of his recovery. All the other cases are progressing as I should wish.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. W. BOLTON.

To Lieutenant-Colonel Sankey.

No. 243.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 733.) *Therapia, July* 6, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Varna respecting disorders at Rustchuk.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 243.

Vice-Consul Dalziel to Mr. Layard.

Varna, July 4, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that Mr. Consul Reade arrived here this morning, and having found the launch of the Danube Commissioners ready to sail, took passage in her to Kustendji.

By order of Mr. Reade, I forwarded the following telegram both to the Governor-General and to the Commander-in-chief.

"I hear on reliable authority that murders and great excesses have been and are being committed upon the Christian inhabitants by Bashi-Bazouks and Mustafas, and in the villages by Circassians; I beg you, in the name of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, to take instant measures to prevent the recurrence of such crimes, the consequences of which may be most unfortunate.

(Signed) "READE, *English Consul.*"

In order that your Excellency may know exactly the wording of these despatches, I inclose copy of the Turkish translation, as it was shown by me to the Mutessarif of Varna, and afterwards sent by telegraph.

* Since dead.

Within the last week a large number of "Zebec" Bashi-Bazouks were landed here. The first night of their arrival they made themselves very obnoxious to the inhabitants, as also on the next day, going into shops and offices demanding money, &c., so much so that during that forenoon nearly every shop had to be shut.

The local authority, however, seeing the state of affairs, confined these volunteers to barracks, and now the town is tranquil. It is very much to be desired that when such well-known bad characters are sent here, they should be marched at once to a camp outside the town, instead of being quartered within the town itself. I cannot but say that the local authority acted well when it realized the necessity of doing so; but it should have foreseen what would have arrived,—the character of those Zebec volunteers being well known.

I believe that a state of panic exists in the various villages and towns in the neighbourhood of Rustchuk, and that the roads are crowded by Turkish families flying from their homes towards this place.

The Governor of Varna has taken measures to form a camp for their accommodation near the Monasteries of St. Demetrius and St. Constantine, between this place and Baltchick. I intend, however, to advise his Excellency that it would be better if these poor people should be directed to cross the Balkans, where they could find more room; and I venture to call the attention of your Excellency to the result which may be expected, and to suggest that such steamers as bring troops, &c., here, should be ordered, if possible, to receive on board, free of cost, as many of these poor people as possible, and convey them to Constantinople; for the result of keeping an immense number of refugees in a fortress such as this might be disastrous.

As far as I can hear the Bulgarian villagers are remaining quietly in their homes, hoping for good, rather than evil, at the hands of the invaders.

I retain your despatches for Colonel Lennox until I receive a telegram from him where to send them, he having left this with the intention of going to the front, wherever it might be; and I forward by this post (Imperial Austrian) a packet of despatches from Colonel Lennox to your Excellency.

(Signed) W. N. DALZIEL.

No. 244.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 14.)

(No. 376.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, July* 9, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship a short epitome by Mr. Egerton of articles from the Russian press on the presence of the British fleet at Besika Bay, and on the relative policy of England and Austria towards Russia in regard to the Eastern question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 244.

Précis of Articles from the Russian Press, by Mr. Egerton, July 8 *and* 9, 1877.

"Novaia Vremia" of July 8.

RUSSIA is warring against the Porte by arms; against England and Austria by the pen. Both these Powers have their interests in the East, and Russia has promised not to disturb them. As regards Constantinople, there is still much difference of opinion between the English and Russian Cabinets, but our diplomacy must bring round Lord Beaconsfield's Government to the view that British interests lie on the route to India, *i.e.*, on the north and South of Africa—in a word, everywhere but where our own interests are concerned—and that, on our own confines, we have a right to demand certain concessions from Lord Beaconsfield.

As regards Austria, to please her, Russia has kept Servia out of the war; up to the present Austria has kept her word to Russia in form, but in fact the Hungarian party has forced its Government to send 20,000 men of the Hungarian army to Semlin, and to strengthen the garrisons on the Servian frontier. Servia is thus threatened from Hungaria, as are Bosnia and Herzegovina from Croatia and Dalmatia.

Servia's best course for her own defence would be to throw herself solely under Russian protection, to preserve, for the present, at least, a formal neutrality, but to make every military preparation for war later; in this manner she may form the right wing of the Russian army, without having to make war at once, and will obtain all the advantages which the successful termination of Russia's campaign will give her.

"Novoia Vremia" of July 8.

Writing of discussion in House of Commons respecting despatch of British fleet to Besika Bay, considers the tone of Sir Stafford Northcote's speech and of the opposition in general as a fresh proof of the neutrality imposed by English public opinion on the Tory Cabinet, and of the truth of the reported opposition in the Cabinet itself to the idea of despatching troops to the Mediterranean.

The moving of the German fleet from Port Said also must make the British Government reflect that Russia has got an ally of a better character in the Government of Prince Bismarck than Mr. Gladstone's Government proved to France in the latter's troubles in 1871.

"Russki Mir" of June 8.

The English, who most unfairly insist more on the importance of Constantinople than does Russia herself, though the Bosphorus is Russia's sole egress in the south, have now sent their fleet to Besika Bay; in other words, they are nearer the Turkish capital than the Russian armies. This conduct of the English Government is disquieting, and the assurances of the English Ministers in Parliament are not more satisfactory to Russia than the assurances of the Russian Government that it will not keep Constantinople appear to be to the British Government.

"Golos" of June 8.

1. Considers dispatch of the British fleet was made by the Beaconsfield Government more for home party purposes than as a serious move of foreign policy. In any case, however, no action of the British fleet will change Russia's determination.

2. Devotes a long article to the humane aims of Russia, which were foiled at the Brussels Congress by England, to alleviate the sufferings entailed by war. Russia will, however, hold to the principles she laid down at Brussels, and act with the greatest humanity in the country she is invading, and no truth should be attached to the false Turkish telegrams.

"Golos" of July 8.

In an article on the discussion in the House of Commons respecting the fleet in Besika Bay, says it is clear that the presence of the British fleet will not bear any practical results, no more than it obtained last year. It is merely an empty protest against Russian policy, and it does not even seem probable that the strength of the fleet will be considerably increased.

No. 245.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

Belgrade, July 13, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

HER Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople agrees with me that Lieutenant Marshall had better proceed to Widdin at once. I shall therefore instruct him accordingly as soon as I hear that your Lordship approves.

No. 246.

Consul-General White to Lord Tenterden.—(*Received July* 14.)

Belgrade, July 13, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

VICE-CONSUL requests transmission to Colonel Home, Intelligence Department, of following:—

"I start immediately Widdin. Shall require three horses. How shall money be recovered?

No. 247.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 262.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 13, 1877.

SULTAN'S Envoy to Afghanistan left yesterday. His instructions, of which I have a copy, are to the following effect:—

He is to go to Bombay and take Turkish Consul with him to Peshawur. He is to remain there to make arrangements for carrying out his mission, as the Ameer may be influenced by Russia with respect to it, and may wish to conceal its object from his people. As the Akoud of Swat and the principal Chiefs and Ulemas are believed to disapprove of conduct of Ameer, the Envoy will endeavour to gain them over, and to this end will send to them the two persons who accompany him to teach the Mussulmans the news and to warn them against the intrigues of Russia. The Akoud must induce everyone to obey the august orders of the Imam of Islamism and Caliph. Envoy will then proceed to Cabul and present his letters of credence to the Ameer. He will call on the Prime Minister, the Sheikh-ul-Islam, and other notables, but will avoid taking part with any of the Ameer's rivals. He is to warn the Ameer that he has to fear not Persia but Russia, who is the enemy of Islam and of the Mahomedan States of Central Asia, and intends to annex Bokhara and then Afghanistan. Ameer should consequently do all in his power to be at peace with England, the friend of Turkey. By listening to Russia he will hand over to her 5,000,000 or 6,000,000 Mussulmans under his rule, and bring ruin upon the neighbouring Mahomedan States. Such conduct being against the Holy Law of the Prophet, the Sultan, as the Caliph of Islam, warns him against it, but has no intention to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. Ameer is advised, for the safety of Islam, to have an army of 150,000 men to resist designs of Russia and maintain independence of the country. Envoy is to explain all this to the Akoud of Swat and the notables, and to do his utmost to renew friendly political relations between England and Afghanistan. His general conduct will be guided by circumstances, and when he has accomplished the object of his Mission he will return to Constantinople, leaving Ahmed Effendi at Peshawur.

I venture to suggest that the above should be communicated to Indian Government.

No. 248.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 263.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 13, 1877.

VICE-CONSUL at Filibe telegraphs that the Mutessarif has received a telegram from the Governor of Kazanlik, stating that a number of Mussulman refugees flying from the Russians have been massacred in cold blood by Bulgarians in the gorge of Kain Boghaz, between Tirnova and Kazanlik. The refugees thus murdered included women and children.

No. 249.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 264.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 13, 1877.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 4th instant, I have been informed three weeks ago there were 12 battalions at Widdin, 20 more in the neighbourhood, 6 squadrons, and 6 batteries. Provision supply reported good; artillery said to be well horsed.

No. 250.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 265.) *Constantinople, July* 14, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

VICE-CONSUL DUPUIS states that Governor-General of Adrianople informs him that Russians have established Military Tribunal at Selvi for trial of Mussulmans alleged to be implicated in Bulgarian insurrection of last year; that Bulgarians are invited to denounce Mussulmans, who are at once shot or hanged, and that the Russians are committing great barbarities on the poor defenceless Mussulman inhabitants of that part of the country.

No. 251.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 266.) *Constantinople, July* 14, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

TURKISH Minister for Foreign Affairs begs me to ask Government of Bombay by telegraph to Turkish Consul there, to inform by telegraph Afghanistan Envoy who, Porte has learnt, has been sent to Peshawur by the Ameer, that a Cosaskier named Said Ahmet Khoolousi Effendi has been named by the Sultan His Imperial Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary to the Ameer; that he left Constantinople on the 12th, and that he will go to Cabul, and to request the Envoy to have the goodness to help Ambassador on his journey.

Will you ask Indian Government to do so?

No. 252.

Mr Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14.)

(No. 267.) *Constantinople, July* 14, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

CONSUL-GENERAL at Bagdad telegraphs this morning as follows:—

"Governor-General of Bagdad has intimated that people of Herbella have rebelled, and he intends to coerce them by military force. I have sent telegram to our Native Agent to warn all British Indian subjects to abstain from taking part in the struggle. Will have Proclamations posted also."

No. 253.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, July 14, 1877, 2·45 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)

PLEASE send home as soon as possible Captain Fife's Report, and any further information you can get as to the works in progress for the defence of the Gallipoli peninsula.

No. 254.

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General White.

Foreign Office, July 14, 1877, 3·45 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)

I APPROVE of your sending Vice-Consul to Widdin. With reference to his inquiry as to horses, he may charge expenses for travelling on the public service, taking care to keep them within as reasonable limits as possible.

No. 257*.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 15.)

(No. 379.) *St. Petersburgh, July* 11, 1877.

My Lord,

ON the receipt this day of the information forwarded to me by your Lordship respecting the sinking by the Russians of barges laden with stone in the Sulina mouth of the Danube, I at once addressed a note, of which a copy is annexed, to M. de Giers, in which I have begged his Excellency to take immediate steps to prevent the destruction of the channel of that branch of the Danube.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 257*.

Lord A. Loftus to M. de Giers.

St. Petersburgh, July 11, 1877.

M. le Conseiller Privé,

HER Majesty's Government have learnt that the Danubian Commission sitting at Galatz has been officially informed that the Imperial military authorities, instead of torpedoes, are sinking barges filled with stone in the Sulina branch of the Danube, the results of which will be most disastrous to the future navigation of that river.

I beg to invite your Excellency's attention to this very important subject in the hope that the necessary instructions may be given with the least delay to prevent the destruction of this great and useful channel, which has already cost Europe the labours of so many years.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 255.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 14, 8 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, July* 14, 1877.

TELEGRAM of Danube Commissioner:—

"With reference to my telegram of the 11th instant on receipt of your official notification that the barges have actually been sunk in the Sulina mouth of the Channel, it may be proposed that the Commission make formal declaration. I shall join in this declaration unless I receive contrary orders by the 17th instant."

No. 256.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 15.)

(No. 151.) *Athens, July* 7, 1877.

My Lord,

DURING a visit which M. Tricoupi paid to me the day before yesterday, he mentioned that another difficulty had arisen with the Porte in consequence of the arbitrary expulsion from Crete of a Greek gentleman named Philon, a very inoffensive member of Athenian society, who had gone there on a visit to his sister, the wife of a Cretan.

It appears, from what M. Tricoupi told me, that M. Philon had scarcely arrived in Crete when he was forcibly carried off and re-embarked on board a steamer, after undergoing very rough and unjustifiable treatment at the hands of the authorities; that no notice was given beforehand to the Greek Consul of the intended expulsion; and that the case was looked upon by the other European Consuls as so great a violation of propriety, as well as of the Capitulations, that they had all joined in remonstrating against the conduct of the Pasha and of the other authorities concerned, with the exception of the French Consul, whose instructions obliged him to hold aloof from all questions which did not concern French interests.

As M. Tricoupi proceeded to inform me that the Hellenic Government would feel obliged to require that M. Philon should be allowed to return to Crete for a few days, however inconvenient it might be to him to do so, and as I did not know how far such a condition could be properly insisted upon, I did not encourage M. Tricoupi to expect any assistance from me in the matter.

I said that as the other Consuls in Crete, with one single exception, appeared to have taken up the case, they must have reported it to their respective Ambassadors at Constantinople, and that if M. Coundouriotis had any difficulty in obtaining proper redress from the Porte, he could apply to his colleagues for their support and assistance.

M. Tricoupi expressed his hope that the matter would be settled without becoming one of more importance than it ought to be, and said that Photiades Bey had given him satisfactory assurances to that effect. He had not, however, been made acquainted with the worst features of the case when he first spoke to Photiades Bey about it, and the answer which the Greek Consul and, as I understood, his colleagues had received from the Pasha had been neither satisfactory nor conciliatory.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 257.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 15.)

(No. 152. Confidential.) *Athens, July* 7, 1877.

My Lord,

HAVING learnt indirectly that Mr. Consul Sandwith was of opinion that an insurrection would probably break out in Crete before the end of the present month, I inquired two days ago of M. Tricoupi what news he had received respecting the state of affairs in that island.

M. Tricoupi said that he believed that all the preparations had been made for an insurrection, and that it might break out at any time.

Upon my expressing a doubt as to whether the Cretans had a sufficient supply of

arms for the commencement of an insurrection, in order to sound him as to whether the Hellenic Government would permit arms to be sent from here, M. Tricoupi answered that as soon as the outbreak occurred a sufficient quantity of arms would be sent direct from London!

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 258.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 268.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 14, 1877.*

I HAVE the following from Mahmoud Damat Pasha:—

"Porte heard this morning that about 200 Mahommedan men, women, and children, who were escaping in carts towards Varna, were overtaken by the Russian cavalry, who murdered the men and children and violated the women, who were afterwards killed in a most horrible manner. These deeds will soon be known to the Mussulman population everywhere, and though the Government feels strong enough to restrain the people now, it is feared that indignation and anger of the Mussulmans can no longer be restrained and that they will retaliate upon the Christians. The Government has, therefore, every reason to dread the consequences that may ensue from a popular outbreak."

Can nothing be done to put a stop to these horrors, reports of which come to me from all sides?

No. 259.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 269. Most Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 14, 1877.*

THE plan of works at the Gallipoli Peninsula has been finally decided, but they will not be commenced before ten days' time, as labour is not yet procurable on account of harvest. The lines of Buyuk Tchekmedje are being constructed, and, I am assured, will be completed in about six weeks.

Your telegram of to-day just received. Captain Fife's report on the Gallipoli line of fortification sent by messenger on Wednesday. I am doing my best to push on the work.

No. 260.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 270.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 15, 1877.*

VICE-CONSUL SANKEY informs me that the Turks will not defend Kustendji. The authorities have already embarked ready to leave, and the troops have fallen back on Silistria. The Russians had possession of Tchernavoda, and were close to the railway. Forty Circassians made prisoners by the Russians are stated to have been shot.

No. 261.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 271.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 15, 1877.*

CONSUL BLUNT telegraphs from Kazanlik yesterday that the Russians have burnt a number of Mahommedan villages, and that others between Tirnova, Dranova, and Valona had been abandoned on account of the barbarous conduct of the enemy. On that day Russian field artillery had burnt some villages in gorge of Hainkoay in the district of Kazanlik, and it is stated had massacred the inhabitants. These

villages are only four hours distant from Kazanlik, and at the same distance from railway towards Yeni-Zaghra. Up to that time the Kaimakam, Judge, and the Mahommedan and Christian notables had reassured and quieted the people.

Vice-Consul Brophy also telegraphs yesterday that the Mussulman inhabitants of that part of the country are in a deplorable state; that the Russians and Bulgarian Christians at their instigation are committing shocking outrages upon Mussulmans; and that unless a stop be put to their barbarities the consequences will be most deplorable.

No. 262.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 272.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 15, 1877.*

VICE-CONSUL at Adrianople reports that it is telegraphed that the Russians have crossed the Balkans at Bogus, attacked and defeated the Turks near Eskizaghra. Fugitive families are coming to Adrianople. Order and tranquillity prevail there.

No. 263.

Lieutenant-Colonel Nixon to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, July 14, 1877.*

THE Governor-General of Bagdad has intimated that the people of Kerbela have rebelled and it is his intention to coerce them with a military force. I have sent a telegram to our Native Agent to warn all British Indian subjects to abstain from taking part in the struggle, and will have Proclamations to that effect posted at Kerbela. I am apprehensive the Arabs on the Euphrates will revolt and confusion be increased.

No. 264.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 3. Most Confidential.) *Russian Imperial Head-Quarters, Simnitza, on the Danube, July 8, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that I arrived here yesterday evening.

This morning His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Nicholas, whom I met in the Emperor's garden, called me to one side, and spoke to me in the kindest and most cordial tone.

The Grand Duke expressed his regret at my having reported to my Government the manner in which he had received me, adding that the fact of my having done so had rendered the relations between England and Russia even more delicate than they had formerly been.

His Imperial Highness gave me various reasons which, in his opinion, justified his conduct towards me at Ploeshti, and I avoided in any way answering him, as I saw that it was the Grand Duke's sole wish to smooth matters over, and let the past be forgotten.

The only remark I made was to the effect that I conceived it to be my duty to ask for instructions from your Lordship before accepting the conditions on which the Grand Duke proposed that I should join his head-quarters, and that, such being the case, I was sure His Imperial Highness would not blame me for doing what I believed to be my duty.

Thus ended our somewhat long conversation on this unfortunate matter, and the Grand Duke begged me to go straight to him if he could ever be of any service to me.

We were in a garden overlooking the Danube at the time, and the Grand Duke told me that, during the crossing, an English officer dressed in scarlet, and on the side of the Turks, had been killed, and pointed out the spot on the opposite bank where he had been buried.

He also showed me the spot in the same garden where, eight days before the crossing, he had determined to make an attempt from Simnitza to Sistova, and added that he himself had on that occasion seen through his glasses three English officers all dressed in red with the Turks.

This is probably a mistake; and, as the fact of these persons, whoever they may be, being dressed in scarlet, appeared to induce the Grand Duke to look upon the matter as a demonstration on the part of England, I would suggest that I be instructed, if possible, to deny that they were English officers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRED. WELLESLEY.

No. 265.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 4. Most Confidential.)
Russian Imperial Head-Quarters, Simnitza, on the Danube, July 3, 1877.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 3 of this day's date, I reported the conversation which I had this morning with His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Nicholas.

A short time afterwards I had the honour of an interview with His Majesty the Emperor.

His Majesty received me most graciously, and having ascertained from me that matters had been satisfactorily arranged between the Grand Duke and myself, he expressed his pleasure at seeing me and begged me to sit down.

His Majesty, who seemed very nervous, and whose voice faltered a great deal, immediately commenced speaking about the present state of the relations between England and Russia.

The Emperor said that there was no use attempting to disguise the fact that these relations were now of a most delicate nature, and he was at a loss to know the reasons on which English suspicions were founded.

I told the Emperor that, having left St. Petersburgh a month ago, I was entirely ignorant of what had been going on since that time, and that I had hoped that matters had been brought to a happy conclusion between the two countries.

"No," said the Emperor, "unfortunately that is not the case, and Lord Beaconsfield appears at the present moment to have 'aggressive' ideas, why I cannot say."

The Emperor went on to say that he had already protested against any idea on his part of molesting either the Suez Canal or India, and added, that he had not the slightest wish to menace British interests in any way; on the contrary, it was his earnest desire to remain on friendly terms with England.

With regard to Constantinople, His Majesty had already stated to Lord Augustus Loftus at Livadia, that he had no wish or intention of acquiring it, and since that time he had in no way changed his mind.

His Majesty thought that his word of honour as a gentleman should be sufficient, and conceived it to be beneath his dignity to repeat the same thing so often.

"People appear to think," said the Emperor, "that the present is an Anglo-Russian question, but I cannot see on what they base their arguments."

The Emperor was so earnest that I felt he wished me to repeat this conversation, and I therefore asked him whether he desired me to consider his remarks as confidential or whether I might communicate them to my Government.

His Majesty sanctioned my reporting his words, and told me to add how touched he was at his daughter having been allowed by the Queen to go to St. Petersburgh before Her Majesty could have received his letter on the subject.

The Emperor also told me to state that he is awaiting with anxiety a letter from the Queen which has already been forwarded from St. Petersburgh.

I took this opportunity of telling the Emperor how false were the statements as to my having reported that in the Russian army there was neither bread for the men nor ammunition for the guns, which were, I believe, the origin of all the rumours circulated at my expense.

His Majesty said he believed me, and was glad to hear what I said, and asked me, smiling, whether I had remarked that he had taken no notice of me during the winter, as he had heard that I was very hostile to Russia.

The Emperor then took me to the window and showed me the positions occupied

by the Turks previous to the crossing of the Danube. When I took leave, His Majesty shook hands with me and said "I am sure I have a gentleman to deal with."

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRED. WELLESLEY.

No. 266.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.

(No. 564. Very Confidential.)
Vienna, July 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I AM informed by the Turkish Ambassador that, in consequence of instructions from the Porte, he has asked Count Andrassy to remonstrate with the Russian Government against the unnecessary cruelty and devastation with which the war is being carried on. His Excellency stated in reply that he had obtained from the Russian Government an engagement which they now regretted, to respect the neutrality of Servia, and that he was also prepared, on the close of the war, to use the influence of Austria-Hungary with a view to the limitation of its consequences, but he said he must decline to interfere with the military measures adopted by Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 267.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 573. Secret.)
Vienna, July 7, 1877.

My Lord,

AN Austrian gentleman, who has access to official sources of information, stated to me in a recent private and confidential conversation, that if Count Andrassy had changed the policy which he wished to pursue five years ago with respect to Turkey, it was because he could not look for support to Great Britain, and that he has, therefore, been obliged to secure the best arrangements he can for the protection of Austrian interests, while making large concessions to Russian ambition. My informant also said that he had lately had an audience of the Emperor, at which His Majesty had spoken to him with regret of the inevitable advantages that Russia must gain from the course which the Eastern question has taken, but he said His Majesty seemed to find consolation in a hope which he expressed that whatever arrangements may be made in consequence of the war, will have a permanent character, and that Austria-Hungary may, therefore, find them more advantageous than if a mere patching up or replâtrage of the relations between the Porte and its subjects had maintained the uncertainty with respect to the future which has so long prevailed in the East of Europe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 268.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 580.)
Vienna, July 9, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 9th instant, I have inquired of Baron Orczy whether there is any truth in the information which has reached Her Majesty's Government, that the bands of insurgents therein referred to had assembled on the Austrian territory, and he assured me that the report is entirely unfounded, and that, in consequence of the reduced number of Turkish troops in Bosnia, the insurgents have not found it necessary to seek for safety on Austrian territory.

It is possible, however, he said, that insurgents seen on a strip of territory between the Unna and the Austrian frontier may be supposed by the Turkish authorities, whose troops seldom cross the river, to have passed into Austria.

He said also that almost all the troops in Bosnia are now concentrated in the towns, and that marauding bands of insurgents are consequently able to proceed

wherever they may think fit, pillaging both the Mahommedan and the Christian population.

Besides, in the north-west of the province there is a range of mountains, which no Turkish military or police force has attempted to cross during the last year, and which has therefore become a safe place of refuge for the insurgents.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 269.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 585. Confidential.) *Vienna, July 11, 1877.*

My Lord,

A REPORT that the Russians are sinking barges filled with stones in the Sulina branch of the Danube, a proceeding to which your Lordship's telegram of yesterday referred, has been received at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs here, but it had not yet been sent this morning to Count Andrassy, who is again confined to the house at Schönbrunn. I have had some confidential conversation, however, on the subject with Baron Schwegel, the Director of the Commercial Department, who is personally of opinion that some steps should be taken to protect the interests of the navigation, and he seemed to think that a question might be raised as to whether the channel of the river can be included in the works of the Commission, which have been declared neutral, with respect to which point, I observed, that it seemed to me that, as the depth of the river had been doubled by the operations of the Commission, the deepened channel should be fairly included in the neutralized works.

Much importance will be attached here to the opinion of Her Majesty's Government on this point, and on the measures which should be taken to remedy the mischief which has been already done, and to prevent any further injury to the Channel; and Baron Schwegel said he was sure Count Andrassy would be glad to receive, as soon as possible, a communication of the views of Her Majesty's Government on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 270.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 590.) *Vienna, July 12, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 580 of the 9th instant, I have requested Captain Cooper, who arrived here yesterday, to ascertain, if possible, on his way to Bosna Serai, whether there is any foundation for the report referred to in your Lordship's telegram of the 7th instant of large bodies of Turkish insurgents having been allowed to assemble on Austrian territory.

I have likewise requested him to ascertain whether the strip of Turkish territory between the Unna and the Austrian frontier, and also the range of mountains on the north-west part of Bosnia, are occupied in safety by the insurgents, in consequence of the negligence of the Turkish authorities, or the inadequate military means at their disposal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 271.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 592.) *Vienna, July 12, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the inclosed despatches, which have been addressed to me by Major Gonne, Military Attaché to this Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 271.

Major Gonne to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir, *Marienbad, July 3, 1877.*

IN reporting on military preparations in the Austrian Empire, it is necessary to direct attention to the fact that preparation for any and every eventuality commenced last autumn; and even at a more early date the "order of battle" was made for an Austrian occupation of the Turkish Slav provinces. Therefore, when I assert that not a battalion has been recently moved, I by no means infer that the Government is otherwise than ready to cross the line of neutrality.

What one cannot fail to observe is that the scheme for occupation attracts more attention than the order of battle against Russia. The last named scheme was worked out during the present year and modified the former, in that the Landwehr, which was intended to replace the troops commanded by General Molinary, finds its place in the first line of the Russian battle order. I am led to suppose that the forces intended for occupation are as nearly as possible those detailed by me last year, that is to say, the corps for Bosnia will be made up of troops from the Gratz and Pest commands and artillery from Vienna, whilst the 18th Division in Dalmatia will be reinforced by troops used to mountains, and mountain batteries from the Tyrol. I need not add that the contract price of freight for the movement of both troops and stores has long ago been arranged with the Lloyd Adriatic Steam Company. And also the problem of how to make use of river communication in conjunction with railways in order to feed the depôts of stores which supply the first line has been thoroughly worked out.

I am confident there can be no occupation without mobilization, and a mobilization can never remain secret. The orders issued within the last ten days are as follows:—

"1. The waggons and stores for twenty batteries of field artillery to be completed with all haste in the Vienna Arsenal.

"The guns are made, but the equipment for the Uchatius batteries, including ammunition, is still far from complete.

"2. Companies of the active battalions to be filled up to their peace establishment from the reserve or depôt battalions, which will immediately fill up from the supernumerary conscripts of 1876 (a certain number of conscripts over and above the needful are kept each year for this purpose)."

No order of any kind has been given to the reserve which points to immediate action.

The Archduke Albert, during his recent inspection in the Gratz command, infused some little unwonted enthusiasm in military circles, but your Excellency is well aware that the Inspector-General of the Army will never be enthusiastic in any anti-Russian preparation.

It seems to me that the foreign policy of Austria will shortly be more defined, if the report prove true that the Bulgarian army contemplates a passage of the Danube into Servia at Radugevacs, two miles from the mouth of the Timok.

It is unnecessary, however, to anticipate the evil hour.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. GONNE, *17th Lancers.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 271.

Major Gonne to Sir A. Buchanan.

(Confidential.) *Vienna, July* 10, 1877.

Sir,

IT may not be uninteresting if I report, for the information of Her Majesty's Government, the views of the military Governors north and south of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

By pure accident I met Baron Rodich in Bohemia, whilst a colleague* conversed with Field-Marshal Lieutenant-General Mollinary, immediately after these officers returned from their recent interview with His Majesty and his advisers at Vienna.

The Generals urged as strongly as possible the policy of an immediate occupation of the Turkish Slav provinces, and their arguments had great weight with His Majesty, but failed to shake the resolve of Count Andrassy.

General Mollinary was very despondent. My colleague thus quotes his language :—

"Russia is not the sole but a prime agent in the Slav movement.

"In the Austrian Empire we have 10,000,000 Slavs and under 6,000,000 Magyars, yet the policy of the Government is to draw the Slavs into the arms of Russia.

"In Bulgaria and Bosnia you have the same race, the same family names; I know the families. In Bosnia I have offshoots of these same families. It is little short of madness to cast their lot with Russia" (or words to this effect).

Then the General exclaimed to my friend, as he did last year to me, that the whole scheme for governing had been worked out, and that the Austrian troops would pass over the frontier without risk of bloodshed, &c.

As your Excellency may suppose, I ascertained the views of the Bohemian Slavs also, and found they had undergone some change. I heard nothing about home rule or a share in the Government of the Austrian Empire, but the Slavs predict a struggle between the Slav and German races.

In Bohemia the language of the Slav people indicates the teaching of the church; Panslavism is evidently the doctrine taught. The German population asserts as heretofore that their Slav countrymen may bark, but won't bite. The Germans in Austria are respected, but not loved; they are the skilled workmen; even in the army there is a nickname for every man or officer of German birth.

My object is to call attention to General Mollinary's theory that a Slav movement is on foot, independent of the Russo-Turkish war, and I venture to express an opinion that the General is right in asserting that the policy of giving satisfaction to the Magyar to the detriment of the Slav is a danger to the stability of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. No one ever asserts that the Hungarian will bark but not bite, but taking the General's figures into consideration, the bark of the 10,000,000 deserves more attention than the bite of the 6,000,000.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. GONNE, *17th Lancers.*

No. 272.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 16.)

(No. 593. Confidential.) *Vienna, July* 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE reason to believe that Count Andrassy was much surprised and dissatisfied at the language of the Emperor Alexander in his Proclamation to the Bulgarians, but as far as I can learn, he does not appear to have offered any comments upon it in his communications with the Russian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

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* The French Military Attaché at Agram.

No. 273.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 16.)

(No. 63. Political.)

My Lord, *Bosna-Serai, July* 6, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the Mushir Suleiman Pasha is ordered to join the forces on the Danube with forty battalions, and, it is said, has already quitted Podgoritza. Nine battalions will be sent from Albania to strengthen the garrison in the Herzegovina, and the Ferik Ali Pasha will be left in command. The Ferik Vely Pasha remains in command of the forces in Bosnia.

Troops have also been sent again towards the Servian frontier, the authorities fearing a movement on the part of Servia. I think, however, that their fears are groundless, although it is possible that both the Montenegrins and Servians may take advantage of the reduction of the forces in these provinces to make hostile incursions into the frontier districts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 274.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 16.)

(No. 64. Political.)

My Lord, *Bosna-Serai, July* 6, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 59, Political, of the 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, in reply to Constant Pasha's inquiries regarding the reported imprisonment and massacre at Banialuka and Derbend of Bosnian fugitives who had returned from Servia, both the Mutessarif of the former place and the Kaimakam of the latter state that there is not a foundation of truth in this report, and that, to their knowledge, no fugitives even have returned from Servia to the district of Derbend. M. de Polo, the Austrian Vice-Consul at Banialuka, has also replied to M. Theodorovich's inquiries that he can learn nothing regarding any such outrage, and is of opinion that it is a pure invention.

M. de Polo, however, reports a lamentable excess committed on some Christians on the 4th of June, at Veliki Strug, between two and three miles' distance from Gradishka. It would appear that a party of Christians—men, women, and children, unarmed—endeavoured to pass over the Save into Austria. The Croatian "serezhans," or "gens d'armes," would not allow them, and they were consequently overtaken by a party of pursuing Turks, who killed and decapitated three of the men, and stuck their heads on poles on the banks of the Save. It is not known what became of the remainder of the party, which dispersed in flight. The Turkish authorities at Gradishka, on representations from the authorities of Austrian Gradishka, had the heads removed.

M. Dragomanovich, Austrian Vice-Consul at Livno, also reports several isolated cases of murder of Christians by Mussulmans in that district.

With the country still in this disturbed state, and at a time when the Porte should endeavour to select the most capable and conscientious functionaries it possesses for this province, I regret to have to report the nomination of Salih Pasha as Mutessarif of Banialuka. The present Mutessarif, Rashid Bey, having signified his intention of resigning, the Governor-General, Mahzar Pasha, wrote to Constantinople, recommending for the post a certain Mehmet Bey, Capitanovich of Ljubushka in the Herzegovina. Mehmet Bey, who has held the post of Kaimakam of Trebinje and other places, and was a member of Haidar Effendi's Commission of Control last year, is, without exception, the most liberal, enlightened, and unfanatical Mussulman in Bosnia. He stands pre-eminently alone amongst his fellow-countrymen. The Porte, however, took not the slightest notice of Mahzar Pasha's recommendation, but named, as I have already stated, Salih Pasha. This latter person is well known in Bosnia as the most fanatical, corrupt, unjust, and tyrannical *employé* ever sent to the province by the Porte, and even the Mussulmans are indignant at his nomination. Mr. Consul Holmes, in his despatch of May 3, 1872, to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, inclosed in Consular despatch No. 14 of May 4, to the Foreign Office, regarding the continued manifestations of Mussulman fanaticism in Bosnia, speaks of

this man as follows:—"There is also another person who ought to be removed from Serajevo, who is said to be an active but secret promoter of this fanaticism, and that is Salih Pasha, who is, and has been some length of time, here under trial for misconduct as Governor of Bihach. This individual is the man who was said to have caused the disinterment of Bib-Doda Pasha in Albania."

As long as such appointments as these are made, it is hopeless to look for any amelioration in the government of this province. His Excellency Mahzar Pasha seems a well-intentioned and energetic man, and Constant Pasha undoubtedly wishes and endeavours to correct abuses and improve the local administration; but without honest and capable subordinates they are powerless to effect any real changes.

The posts of Mutessarif of Banialuka and Bihach are perhaps the most important ones at the present moment in this vilayet; and if the Porte really desires the well-being and tranquillity of the province, it is imperative to appoint men who will govern the districts with a firm but just hand, and not fear to curb the fanaticism, and restrict the power, of the leading Mussulmans.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 275.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 16.)

(No. 283. Secret.)
Berlin, July 9, 1877.

My Lord,

BEFORE leaving Berlin for Varzin, Prince Bismarck asked me to take a walk with him in his garden, and in the course of a long and desultory conversation, I gathered the following impressions:—

In the first instance, I noticed that his views on the present war have undergone some changes; he no longer thinks, as he did in May last, that peace can be made before the Russians cross the Balkan.

He thinks now that the Russians are determined to fight out their quarrel to the end, and that they will take up their winter quarters in Turkey and renew the campaign next spring if necessary.

To this he does not object, and believes that the Guaranteeing Powers will find it easier to settle the Eastern question when the belligerents are thoroughly exhausted and financially ruined.

He thinks the Powers will do well to face the question and settle it once for all, so as to relieve Europe from the danger of a renewal of war in the East for several generations to come.

Russia and Austria will, he says, take care of European Turkey, England had better secure the road to India, and if France would help herself to something in the East and leave Germany alone, who wants peace and nothing else, he would be heartily glad.

Alluding to the newspaper reports respecting an Anglo-Austrian Alliance against Russia, he observed that such a combination would be useless at present. Interference would do more harm than good. Austria had to choose between two evils to prevent the formation of a great Slave State on her frontiers, a quarrel with Russia or an increase of territory. The latter was the lesser evil of the two and the safer policy.

He thought England and Austria would do well to localize the war by a neutral attitude until it is over, when they can step in and secure their interests by mediation, negotiation, or occupation, according to circumstances.

As the belligerents now stand, it is too late, he says, to stop the war as he had hoped some weeks since, and too soon to interfere with advantage.

When prostration sets in, then Austrian troops can march into Bosnia and English ships sail up the Dardanelles to Constantinople, and facilitate the conclusion of a lasting and satisfactory settlement by their presence if necessary.

Speaking of France, Prince Bismarck said that the pending crisis filled him with apprehension. If the administration drifted into clerical and Ultramontane hands, they would probably "attack Germany before a twelvemonth was over, for the President of a thriving Republic, who was mad enough to make the *coup de tête* of the 16th May last, would be equally capable of rushing into a war of revenge, and Madame la Maréchale was as much an Ultramontane as the Empress Eugenie."

Prince Bismarck repeatedly renewed his assurances of wishing to act with

England, and to support Her Majesty's Government in the final settlement of the Eastern question.

The impression left on my mind by the change his language has undergone is that Prince Bismarck, who has all along reckoned on playing a prominent part in the final settlement, now wishes to discourage the establishment of more intimate relations on the part of England with Austria, which he fears may diminish his personal influence later on, and impede the progress of Russia sooner than would suit his ambitious plans.

His language about France and his alarm at a fresh invasion are the same as they have been for the last three years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 276.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 16.)

(No. 284. Confidential.)
Berlin, July 9, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Mr. Layard's Confidential despatch No. 644 of the 20th ultimo, inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 289 of the 2nd instant, respecting German mediation between Turkey and Russia, I asked Prince Bismarck whether there was any truth in the report that the Porte would not reject an offer of mediation on the part of Germany at the present juncture.

Prince Bismarck replied that Prince Reuss seemed to think so, but that his impression was a personal one and not apparently founded on any fact which could give it importance, and as his instructions were to observe the strictest neutrality, it rested with the Porte to take the initiative of asking for mediation if they really wished for it, which he, Prince Bismarck, still thought very doubtful.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 277.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 16.)

(No. 12. Political.)
Corfu, July 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Turkish military stores detained at this Custom-house as contraband of war have been embarked on board an Austrian steamer for Trieste, whence it is to be supposed they will be returned by the Lloyd's coast steamer direct to Prevesa, their original destination.

2. Since I had the honour of addressing your Lordship on the 5th instant (Consular No. 51), on the subject of appointing a Consular Officer at Durazzo, I have had an opportunity of conversing with the Rev. Dr. Thompson, principal agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society at Constantinople, and also one of the agents of the Edinburgh Association for the relief of the distressed Bulgarians.

Dr. Thompson is on his way back to Constantinople, and in the course of his tour visited Volo, Larissa, and Salonica, thence by railroad to Mitrovizza, on the Servian frontier. He tells me that between Novi-Bazar and Prishtina of eighty-four flourishing villages only four are left standing. This ruin was worked, not by Bashi-Bazouks or Circassians, but by the Servian insurgents, who drove the Christian inhabitants into Servia for protection, and at the same time carried off all their property of every kind capable of being transported, utterly destroying what they were compelled to leave behind.

Many of the inhabitants, he added, had returned to their ruined homes, but too late to lay down the spring crops, the consequence is, that unless assistance is sent from abroad they must perish from hunger when winter sets in.

From Durazzo Dr. Thompson visited Berat, where he found five Christian and Mahommedan schools, numerously attended, and in which Albanian, Greek, Turkish, and Italian are taught. Many of the scholars were youths, from 18 to 20 years of age. He travelled by easy stages from Berat to Durazzo on

horseback, attended by a single surraggee, taking two days to do the distance, but there is no doubt that with post-horses the journey might be accomplished easily in eight hours. He gives a glowing description of the beauty of the country, where, as far as he could judge, perfect tranquillity reigns. At Durazzo he found the agent of an English mercantile firm, who had been sent out to negotiate a contract for the privilege of felling and exporting oak timber for railroad purposes. "Moyennant 'backshish'" he is sure to succeed!

3. I had written thus far when a report came in that a Turkish fleet is passing up channel northwards, composed of five iron-clads and five transports, the latter probably for the conveyance of the troops no longer required on the Montenegrin frontier to the seat of active hostilities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

No. 278.

Séfvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 16.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 14 Juillet*, 1877.

IL m'est pénible de devoir vous signaler de nouveaux actes de révoltante barbarie commis par les Cosaques dans la province du Danube. Deux villages situés à cinq heures de Rustchuk, Oustroudja et Kadislé, ont été saccagés par les Cosaques, qui ont massacré une trentaine d'habitants Musulmans sans distinction d'âge ni de sexe.

Au village de Bin Punar, ils ont coupé les jupes des femmes et des filles jusqu'à la ceinture et les ont ensuite violées en présence de leurs parents; tous les habitants mâles ont été faits prisonniers; enfin, et pour comble d'horreur, ces barbares, perdant tout sentiment humain, ont coupé les bras d'une femme et ont placé dérisoirement son malheureux enfant dans les bras tronqués et sanglants. Les Monténégrins, qui mutilaient leurs prisonniers et qui avaient ainsi excité l'indignation de l'Europe, ont toujours respecté les femmes et les enfants, et il était réservé aux Russes de donner le spectacle de monstruosités inconnues chez les nations les moins civilisées. Des Cosaques, ayant rencontré à sept heures de distance de Rustchuk des Musulmans qui avaient abandonné leurs villages et s'enfuyaient dans la Montagne, les ont massacrés sans épargner les femmes et les enfants.

Tous ces faits résultent des télégrammes reçus à la Sublime Porte de différentes sources.

No. 279.

Colonel Stokes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 6. Commercial. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Chatham, July 15*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's Confidential despatch of the 13th instant, forwarding, for my observations, copies of two telegrams from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna and Consul at Galatz.

The act of the Russians in sinking barges filled with stones in the Sulina branch of the Danube is likely to entail most serious consequences on the navigable channel of the river. As a military precaution it is effectual, but considering the possible consequences on one of the most successful hydro-technical achievements of this century, it is an act of vandalism which should only have been resorted to in the absence of any other means for preventing the Turkish war-vessels from ascending the river to interrupt the Russian communications. Considering that the torpedoes hitherto planted by the Russian army have effectually stopped the passage of the Turkish vessels, the necessity for the measures now taken is not apparent. The immediate effect of the sinking of these barges will be the formation of shoals over them, which will be extremely difficult of removal at a future day, as the dredgers will encounter the barges and stones under the mud formed over them. The formation of these shoals will also speedily cause the natural shoals of the river to increase in size. But a more important evil may also follow; if the barges have been sunk near the upper entrance to the Sulina at the point called the St. George's Chatab, this débouché of the river may become closed altogether, and the whole body of the Toultcha branch may pass down the St. George's arm. Deprived of current the Sulina mouth will speedily silt up, and thus the labour, money, and skill bestowed upon the Danube for the last twenty years will be thrown away. This last disastrous result may not come to pass unless the sinking of the barges has been effected at the point supposed and on a large scale; but without details to the contrary it is to be presumed that the operation has be carried out in the most effectual manner.

To avoid the evil I have described, whether the lesser or the greater, the barges should be immediately raised before they are buried in silt, or the Sulina diverted from its bed into that of the St. George. Much as I deprecate the act of the Russians, I regret that I am unable to share the opinion of his Excellency Sir Andrew Buchanan: the works, establishments, and staff of the European Commission are declared neutral by Article VII of the Treaty of London of the 13th March, 1871, but by the same Article the right of navigating the waters washing those works with its vessels of war is especially reserved to Turkey; the waters which are open to one belligerent cannot be closed to the other; combats may take place on these waters; they are, therefore, not neutral. A belligerent has power to blockade them, or to turn neutral vessels out of them. I think that the question rather is,—has a belligerent, for the purposes of his offensive or defensive measures, the right to injure permanently a great highway of nations?

As I have had the honour to observe at the commencement of this despatch, it appears to me that whatever may be the answer to this question a belligerent should only avail himself of this right if he can attain his end by no other means.

In the interests of European navigation I think that the Russian Government should be prevailed upon to allow these barges to be raised with the least possible delay. It is probable that that Government did not order them to be sunk, and that the deed has been done by an over-zealous military commander without knowledge of the grave consequences likely to result from his act.

The European Commission possess all necessary means for raising the barges if allowed to send their engineer and workmen to the spot.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. STOKES.

No. 280.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, July 16*, 1877.

IT is reported that Nicopoli was taken in the night, the Russians entering in force at 7 o'clock this morning.

No. 281.

Lieutenant-Colonel Nixon to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bagdad, July 16*, 1877.

WITH reference to previous telegram, Governor-General of Bagdad reports that tranquillity is restored at Kerbela by surrender of chiefs of rebellion.

No. 282.

Consul Richetts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tiflis, July 16*, 1877.

SIEGE of Kars raised. Russian camp is twenty-two versts north-east of that place. Reinforcement of 30,000 soldiers expected here on and after 20th instant.

No. 283.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 273.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 16, 1877.*

CONSUL READE arrived here. Confirms accounts of massacres of Mussulman women and children. From the information he has received it would appear that shocking outrages are principally committed by the Bulgarian Christians at instigation and under the protection of the Russian Cossacks, who are present at them. Reade will return at once to Rustchuk, and asks whether he is authorised to do anything for the protection of the defenceless Mahometan population. I have instructed him and Blunt to do all they can to prevent retaliation on part of Mussulmans.

No. 284.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 274.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 16, 1877.*

THE Sultan has asked me whether, considering the great difficulties in which his Empire is placed, Her Majesty's Government would now object to the employment of Shefket Pasha. Consul Reade, to whom I have spoken on the subject, says that his appointment to a command would have a wonderful effect upon the Turkish troops, who look upon him as one of their ablest and most active Generals.

No. 285.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 16.)

(No. 275.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 16, 1877.*

I AM assured that the Russians have crossed the Balkans in two places, and that they are now in possession of Kazanlik as well as of Eskizagra. All available troops are being hurried up from Constantinople to Adrianople. It is said that the Russian forces that have crossed the Balkans amounted yesterday to forty battalions. The German Ambassador is sending up one of his secretaries to Adrianople on a mission, the object of which I have not yet ascertained. State of affairs very critical, but everything quiet here.

No. 286.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 17.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 16 Juillet, 1877.*

JE continue à remplir le plus pénible devoir en vous signalant les nouveaux actes de barbarie qui, d'après les télégrammes reçus à la Sublime Porte, sont commis par les Russes. Dans les villes et les villages qu'ils envahissent, ils ne se bornent pas à dépouiller la population Musulmane de tout ce qu'elle possède; mais encore ils font subir aux femmes et aux enfants les plus honteux et les plus affreux traitements, et ce au lendemain même où une Proclamation de l'Empereur Alexandre promettait aux habitants Musulmans la sécurité et la justice pour leurs personnes, pour leurs familles et pour leurs biens.

Voici quelques uns des nouveaux actes de cruauté qui nous sont signalés :—

Les habitants de Toms, près Tirnova, s'étant réfugiés dans la Mosquée à l'approche de l'ennemi, ont été brûlés vifs dans cette enceinte. L'ennemi, ayant rencontré 300 chariots chargés de familles fugitives, les a détruits à coups de canon, puis a achevé son œuvre d'extermination en massacrant tous ceux, hommes ou femmes, qu'ils ont pu atteindre. Dans tous les bourgs ou villages occupés par les troupes Russes, les habitations des Musulmans sont toutes livrées aux flammes.

Les Bulgares, excités par l'exemple des troupes Russes, se livrent envers la population Musulmane paisible et résignée à des actes de barbarie et à des outrages encore plus horribles que ceux que commettent les envahisseurs.

Il est nécessaire que le monde civilisé connaisse ces horreurs pour s'en indigner et pour les flétrir.

No. 287.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 325.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 17, 1877.*

WITH reference to your telegram of the 16th instant, in which you state that the Sultan has inquired whether, under the difficult circumstances in which his Empire is placed, Her Majesty's Government still maintain their objections to the employment in an active military capacity of Shefket Pasha, I have to observe to your Excellency that, after all that has passed, it cannot be expected that Her Majesty's Government should acquiesce in his appointment to a command, and it is evident that his employment cannot fail to have a very bad effect upon public opinion in this country.

Her Majesty's Government feel, however, that they have, under present circumstances, no right to dictate to the Porte what officers it shall employ.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 288.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 288.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, July 17, 1877.*

I HAVE taken an opportunity of bringing to the notice of Count Schouvaloff the following reports which have reached Her Majesty's Government from various sources on the subject of outrages inflicted by the Russian troops, or by the Christians acting under their protection, upon the Mahommedan population of the Turkish provinces in Asia and Europe.

These reports are given in the order in which they were received :—

1. It is stated that after the capture of Ardahan the townspeople revolted against the Russians, and that 800 of them were butchered by the Lesghian troops in Russian employment.

2. A letter received by one of Her Majesty's Vice-Consuls from a private source at Soukoum Kaleh reported that 1,500 families had died of starvation at Adler, being forced to fly into the forests to escape the Cossacks, who burnt and pillaged all before them.

3. A number of Mussulman refugees flying from the Russians are reported, by the Governor of Kazanlik, to have been murdered in cold blood by Bulgarians in the gorge of Khaim Boghas, between Tirnova and Kazanlik. The refugees thus murdered included women and children.

4. Mr. Layard reports that the Porte received information on the 14th instant that about 200 Mahommedan men, women, and children, who were escaping in carts towards Varna, were overtaken by the Russian cavalry, who murdered the men and children and violated the women, who were afterwards killed in a most horrible manner.

5. A number of Mahommedan villages are reported to have been burnt, and others between Tirnova, Dronova, and Valona abandoned on account of the conduct of the enemy. Some villages in the gorge of Khaimkoui were burnt, and the inhabitants are said to have been massacred.

A British Consular Agent reported on the 14th instant that the Mussulman inhabitants in that part of the country were in a deplorable state; that the Russians and Bulgarian Christians, at their instigation, were committing shocking outrages upon Mussulmans.

6. Her Majesty's Consul at Rustchuk, who arrived at Constantinople on the 16th instant from Varna, confirmed the accounts of massacres of Mussulman women and children. It appears from the information received by him that shocking outrages

are committed, principally by the Bulgarian Christians, at the instigation and under the protection of the Russian Cossacks, who are present at them.

I added that great fears were entertained that these acts might lead to terrible retaliation on the part of the Mussulmans in places which were not occupied by Russian troops, and that instructions had been given to Her Majesty's Consular Officers to use all the influence they may possess to restrain the Mussulmans from acts of violence.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 289.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 17.)

(No. 277.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 16, 1877.*

FOLLOWING from Vice-Consul at Adrianople:—

"Kaimakam of Yamboli telegraphs that Russian troops passed the Balkans and approached the village of Yeni-Zaagra, but were repulsed, and are being pursued to mountains by troops from this and Slimnia. Great excitement and uneasiness here among Turks and Christians, who are quitting for Constantinople. Otherwise things are quiet."

Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that the place where Russians passed is Yeni, and not Eski-Zaagra, as I reported in my telegram No. 275.

No. 290.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 17.)

(No. 278.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 16, 1877.*

GENERAL DICKSON has just been informed at the palace that only about 8,000 Russians have crossed the Balkans at Hairing Boghas without artillery, and that they are laying waste country in the Yeni-Zara district. Raouf Pasha was attacking them, and, according to a telegram received at that moment by the Sultan, was driving them back. It is impossible to get accurate information as to what is going on. I hope to send (?) Fife to Adrianople as soon as he returns from Gallipoli. Dupuis telegraphs this morning that the news from the Governor of Slimnia is more satisfactory and the public mind more tranquil.

No. 291.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 17.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, July 16, 1877.*

COLONEL WELLESLEY was here yesterday. He saw Prince Gortchakow, who told him he had private information that the Turks intend crossing into Roumania by a bridge from Silistria.

I have no belief in the probability of the attack from the Turks. Wellesley has returned to the Imperial head-quarters, which crossed Danube yesterday.

No. 292.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 17.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, July 16, 1877.*

IT is reported that Nicopolis was taken in the night, the Russians entering in force at 7 o'clock this morning.

No. 293.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 17.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, July 16, 1877.*

OFFICIAL telegram, dated yesterday, from Imperial Commander-in-chief to the Emperor, felicitates His Majesty on the passage of the Balkans by the advanced guard of his army on the 13th instant without a shot being fired. General Gourko has taken Khankioi, occupied by 300 Nizams, who retired towards village of Konaro.

No. 294.

Mr. Plunkett to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 17.)

(Telegraphic.) *Washington, July 16, 1877.*

I HAVE reason to suspect intrigues between Russian Agents and Pacific Mail Company for possible sale of some of their fast ships on Pacific side.

Mr. Houstone, Vice-President of the Company, went lately to London, where he saw Russian Ambassador, and also laid before him plans of two fast steam-ships just built at Philadelphia. Mr. Houstone has now started for Australia, ostensibly on business of the Company.

No. 295.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 17, 1877, 3·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 283 of the 5th instant, an influential deputation has waited upon me with reference to the Black Sea blockade. They have communicated extracts from their correspondence from Odessa and Nicholaieff, declaring that it is not effective, and that the squadron has only once appeared before Odessa, and speedily retired. The steamer from Odessa to Nicolaieff on the 2nd July was running as usual. They further complain that passes have been granted to Greek vessels, so that British vessels are placed at a disadvantage.

Represent this to the Porte, and state that Her Majesty's Government are anxious for a further report.

No. 296.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 17, 1877, 4·5 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 274, Her Majesty's Government cannot, after what has passed, be expected to acquiesce in the appointment of Shefket Pasha, the effect of which, on English opinion, will be very bad; but they have no right to dictate to the Turkish Government what officers it shall employ.

No. 297.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 17, 1877, 4·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 698 of the 29th ultimo, copy of which was sent to St. Petersburgh, Lord A. Loftus inquires whether the Porte will furnish necessary pecuniary means for return of Ottoman subjects to their native country?

No. 298.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July* 17, 1877, 5·45 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 14th instant, British Commissioner may join his colleagues in protesting as to sinking of barges if they decide to do so.

No. 299.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 93.)

My Lord, *Tehrán, June* 15, 1877.

GENERAL FRANCHINI arrived here on the 5th instant. He went from Tiflis by Bahou to Ashooradeh, and after making a short stay there landed at Kara Tuppeh, and came on to Tehran by Saree and Amol by the road constructed a few years ago by the Shah, which is now taken by travellers visiting Tehran, in consequence of the route by Resht being closed, on account of plague. He is accompanied by a military secretary and a Dragoman acquainted with the Toorkoman dialect.

Since his arrival here, General Franchini has twice visited the Minister for Foreign Affairs (who is also Sepeh Salah, or Minister of War and Commander-in-chief), with whom he was acquainted at Constantinople, where he was formerly Military Attaché to the Russian Embassy. It was arranged, at his request, I am informed, that on one of the occasions when he called on the Persian Minister at the camp outside the town, where about 10,000 men are encamped, the troops should be paraded for his inspection, but in consequence of a heavy storm of wind and dust which took place at the time, the troops were not called out.

Notice has, however, been given that a review will take place in a few days, at which the Shah will be present, and to which the foreign Legations are to be invited.

The Russian Minister presented General Franchini to the Shah on the 13th instant. The audience lasted about ten minutes, and no subject of political importance was referred to on either side on that occasion.

I am endeavouring to ascertain what the real object of his visit may be, but as yet I have failed to discover that any political communication has passed between him and the Shah or his Government, and assurances have been given me that up to the present time no proposals of any kind have been made through him which might affect Persian neutrality.

It is said that General Franchini's visit to this place will be of short duration, and that he is to proceed hence by way of Asterabad and Ashooradeh to Kizil Ervad.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WM. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

No. 300.

Consul Abbott to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 7.)

My Lord, *Tabreez, June* 18, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship copies of two despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran.

In Inclosure 1, I have reported a conversation which recently passed between my Turkish colleague and myself respecting troubles likely to occur on the Persian and Turkish frontiers, and I hope your Lordship will kindly approve of the language I held on that occasion.

Inclosure 2 refers to the Persian force which it is proposed to send to Chemen Diryshk, in the district of Salmas; to the influx of Koordish irregulars from Persia into Turkey; and to the evil which, it is to be feared, will result therefrom.

I am sending this despatch under flying seal to his Excellency Mr. Layard.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 300.

Consul Abbott to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

Sir, *Tabreez, June* 16, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that my Turkish colleague, Behdjet Effendi, called upon me this morning to say that he had recently received a communication from the Pasha of Van, stating that Persian Koords of the Shekkokh tribe had crossed the frontier into Turkish territory at Bashkala, committing great depredations; that they had plundered three Turkish villages, and had killed three Turkish subjects. The Effendi went on to say that the Pasha of Van had done his utmost to keep the peace between the two frontiers, and, with this laudable object in view, had sent a Turkish officer, named Khoorschid Bey, to Bashkala, for the purpose of enjoining upon the Turkish Koords to remain quietly in their own homes, and not trouble their brethren over the border.

The Turkish Consul-General imparted this intelligence in an official written communication to the Sahib Divan, and requested his Excellency to take steps to prevent a recurrence of these inroads. The Sahib Divan, instead of replying to the Effendi, expressed a wish to see his Mirza, to whom he handed, for my colleague's perusal, a paper without signature, containing a statement that if the Shekkokh Koords had entered Turkish territory, they had done so with neither hostile nor predatory intentions, but in obedience to a summons calling upon them to join the "djehad," or religious war, as auxiliaries to Turkey.

On the other hand, it appears that the Pasha of Van has informed Behdjet Effendi that he does not require the services of these Khoordish hordes, whose sole object is plunder, and who will be a fresh source of embarrassment to the Turkish cause.

The Turkish Consul-General requested me to bring these facts to your Excellency's knowledge, and sought my advice as to the language I thought he had better hold to the Sahib Divan under the circumstances.

I replied that, above all things, I considered it of the utmost importance that he should adopt a conciliatory tone with the Persian authorities in Azerbaijan; that it would be most unfortunate, at the present crisis of affairs, were old sores re-opened between Turkey and Persia; and that it was necessary for the welfare of both countries that these frontier feuds should cease. I reminded my colleague that any disturbance on either side of the frontier would be turned by Russia to her own advantage; that Russia was eagerly on the watch for incidents of this kind, which might enable her to use Persia as a tool against Turkey, and, whilst striking a fresh blow at the latter, create, under the guise of friendship, serious complications for the former Power. In a word, I pointed out to my colleague that if Turkey and Persia comprehended their true interests, they would put a stop, once for all, to these deplorable occurrences, which were fraught with equal danger to both of them.

I, however, remarked to my colleague that I thought he would be justified in requesting the Sahib Divan to favour him with an official reply to the communication he had made on the part of the Pasha of Van, and that meantime I would report the conversation that had passed between us to your Excellency.

Trusting that the language I have held to my Turkish colleague, with a view to conciliate existing difficulties, will meet with your approval, I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 300.

Consul Abbott to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

Sir, *Tabreez, June* 16, 1877.

WITH reference to my telegram of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to report that the Ikbal-ed-Doulch took leave to-day of the Sahib Divan, and then went to Kara Agatch, a garden on the outskirts of this town, where he will stay a few days previous to pitching his camp on the banks of the Adji Telai.

M. Krobel, my Russian colleague, and one of his Secretaries, who came into town this morning from their country quarters to breakfast with the Sahib Divan, were the only persons present when the Ikbal-ed-Doulch paid his farewell visit.

I have been furnished with a list of all the regiments composing the expedition to be sent to Chemen Diryshk, and will forward it to your Excellency by an early opportunity. As yet, very few of the troops have been collected together. Their wages are

considerably in arrears; they are badly equipped, and insufficiently armed. I am informed that the Ikbal-ed-Doulch has received 20,000 tomans for the expenses of the camp.

Ten infantry regiments, which the Persians put down on the paper as equivalent to 8,000 men, and 2,000 cavalry, regular and irregular, constitute the force which, it is said, will proceed to Chemen Diryshk; but, as your Excellency is aware, Persian regiments seldom have their full complement of men; the actual force will therefore be considerably below the number stated above.

The ostensible object of this expedition is to watch the Turkish frontier, as a precaution against incursions thence into Persia; but, independently of the consideration that the Turks are at present too much occupied with a formidable foe to engage in trivial frontier skirmishes with Persia—so that, in reality, this military display on her part is quite uncalled for—it would have been more to the purpose had she organized an army to keep order in her own dominions. I allude to Persian Koordistan, whence the tribes have been flocking in thousands, and with perfect impunity, from Ooroomiah, Sonj Boulak, Ushnee, and other parts, into Turkey, under the pretext of placing their services at her disposal in the "holy war" against Russia.

It has now become evident that the object these Koords had in view was simply plunder, and the Turks themselves recognize the fact. They would be glad to get rid of these troublesome auxiliaries, but it is to be feared that the mischief which the Persian Government might to a great extent have obviated has already been done, and that these undisciplined hordes from Persia will not prove an element of strength to the Turkish cause, but a source of much evil, the consequences of which, in Asia Minor, will probably be similar to those which attended the presence of the Bashi-Bazouks in European Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

No. 301.

Consul Abbott to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 8.) *Tabreez, June* 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship copies of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran and of a *précis* which I have made of the contents of a letter written to me by his Holiness Mar Shimon, Patriarch of the Nestorians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 301.

Consul Abbott to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

Tabreez, June 11, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Excellency, in original, a letter addressed to me by his Holiness Mar Shimon, Patriarch of the Nestorians.

Being unacquainted with ancient Syriac, I had some difficulty in arriving at a knowledge of its contents, but, through the kindness of the American missionaries, was translated by their Chaldean Scribe into modern Syriac, and then put into Persian. Inclosure 2 is the Persian translation, of which I have made a *précis* in English.

The complaints embodied in the Patriarch's letter appear to me to form two distinct suits:—

1. Kumber, a Turkish subject, *v.* Ali Agha, a Persian subject; a question to be dealt with by the authorities from whom the plaintiff and defendant respectively depend.

2. Yohanna, a Persian subject, *v.* Ali Agha, also of the same nationality, and therefore a case which concerns the authorities of the Persian Government alone.

I have abstained from replying to the Patriarch's letter, nor have I taken any action, official or unofficial, in the matter, and in submitting it to your Excellency, I would respectfully request you to inform me whether you think it would be expedient

for me to make a friendly representation to the local authorities on behalf of the Nestorian Yohanna, with a view to backing up a petition which it seems to me he ought, as a Persian subject, in the first instance to address to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 301.

Précis of the Contents of a Letter from his Holiness Mar Shimon, Patriarch of the Nestorians, to Mr. W. G. Abbott, dated the 22nd Sefer, 1294 (*March* 8, 1877).

AFTER compliments, his Holiness alludes in grateful terms to the protection and aid given to himself and his flock by Her Majesty's Government for many years past; in further proof of which he cites the visit last year amongst the Nestorians of the Rev. Mr. Cutts; complains of the vexatious incursions of Ali Agha, a Persian subject, Chief of the Shekkok tribe, who resides in Persian territory, and committing depredations upon the Persian and Turkish frontiers alike, made a raid, six months ago, upon the villages of Teheyri Gooshar and Ebleel, situated respectively in Persia and Turkey. The Nestorian Yohanna, a Persian, residing at the former, and Kumber, a Turkish subject, who lives at the latter village, the two being in partnership, were heavy losers on this occasion, Ali Agha and his tribe having carried off large flocks of sheep from the above-named villages.

His Holiness invokes the aid of the British Government to obtain redress for the grievances, and concludes with ardent vows for the welfare of England.

No. 302.

Consul Abbott to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 9. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Tabreez, June* 20, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copies of two communications which I received yesterday from Mr. Labaree, an American missionary who resides in the district of Oroomiah, informing me in his letter, under Inclosure 1, of the apprehensions entertained by the Nestorian Christians, in consequence of the threatening attitude of the Koords; and in that dated the 16th instant, under Inclosure 2, that a plan has actually been formed by a certain Sheikh Mohammed of Bamernee, in the district of Amadeah, to assemble an army for the purpose of massacring the Nestorians of Tehoma and Tiary, who dwell in Ottoman territory and in the immediate neighbourhood of the residence of his Holiness Mar Shimon, Patriarch of the Nestorians.

Upon the receipt of these letters, I immediately sent the following telegram to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran:—

"Just received intelligence from Oroomiah. State of affairs throughout Koordistan and on both sides of frontier gives cause for serious apprehensions. Object of Koords not to fight against Russia, but to embarrass Turkey by indiscriminate plunder and massacre. They want a pretext of quarrel with Nestorian Patriarch. Koordish irregulars must not be allowed to go through Tiary and Tehoma. Safety of Christian populations throughout Koordistan is threatened.

"Neither Persia nor Turkey will profit by present position of affairs. Please inform Mr. Layard and Lord Derby."

I subsequently called upon my Turkish colleague, Behdjet Effendi, and obtained from him a letter to Sheikh Obeidoolah of Nochsea—referred to in Mr. Labaree's letter of the 12th instant—urging upon that Chief the necessity of persevering in the friendly course he has hitherto pursued towards the Nestorians, informing him that his good offices have been reported to me and appreciated; and thanking him on my part for the same. This letter to the Sheikh will go to Oroomiah by a messenger whom the American missionaries residing here are sending to-morrow to that place.

Later in the day, I had an interview with the Sahib Divan, who, after His Highness the Prince Governor, is the chief local authority, and made a friendly representation to his Excellency regarding the Shekkok Koords who, setting all law at defiance, have crossed the Persian frontier into Turkey, under the pretext of aiding the

latter Power in the war with Russia, but, in reality, to damage her cause by acts of robbery and violence. They are at present a terror to Mahomedans and Christians alike in the localities they infest.

His Excellency informed me that he had dispatched troops to prevent the Shekkoks from entering Turkish territory, but that they had been powerless to restrain them; and that he would transmit orders to Mirza Mehden Khan, an official sent by the Central Government to Oroomiah for the express purpose of exercising a supervision over boundary matters, to notify to the Chief of the Shekkoks that unless his son, with the Koordish irregulars under his command, quitted the Ottoman territory, their habitations in Persia, situated at Surmieh, would be forthwith burned to the ground.

I am not aware that, in the present instance, there remained any further action for me to take, beyond transmitting this despatch, under flying seal, to Mr. Consul Zohrab of Erzeroum, and to his Excellency Mr. Layard. I have also addressed a separate official communication to the former gentleman, requesting him to be kind enough to inform me whether he has grounds for believing that the Koordish tribes in the districts under his jurisdiction really entertain such sanguinary feelings towards the Christians as Mr. Labaree attributes to them; for if such plans as these be meditated in Koordistan, the Koords on this side of the frontier, also, would probably not be slow to follow the example of their brethren and co-religionists under the Ottoman sway.

The Persian authorities in this province are powerless to control their Koordish subjects; both are under the influence of a Power at war with Turkey. Russian agents are actively at work to foment disturbances between the two frontiers. It is a matter of little moment to Russia by what means her object is attained. By making a tool of Persia she might extend her conquests to Van. A massacre of Nestorians and Armenians by Persian or Turkish Koords would equally serve her purpose—to strike a fresh blow at Turkey through Persia, and then to have Persia at her feet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 302.

Mr. Labaree to Consul Abbott.

Dear Sir, *Seir, June 12, 1877.*

A DAY or two after writing to you last week, we received letters from our Nestorian friends in Koordistan, stating the anxiety they are in owing to the excited and threatening attitude of the Koords.

In Gawar, where Sheikh Obeidoollah is stopping, the fears of the Christians are great, although the Sheikh's influence they state to be a strong protection to them. Still some murders of Christians have taken place, and a lawlessness exists which the Sheikh is powerless to control.

Further in the interior, as in Tehoma and Tiary, Mar Shimon's districts, a more serious concern prevails among our intelligent Nestorian preachers.

Friendly Koords tell them on oath that it is the plan of the Koords from the south-west to seek a passage through the Nestorian districts and use the opportunity for stirring up difficulties with them, enabling them to satiate their thirst for Christian blood or to prove them disloyal to the Turkish Government.

I must think that this state of things gave rise to the story that Mar Shimon had stopped the Sheikh's army from going to Van. It could not refer to the army of Sheikh Obeidoollah of Noshea, as his army does not pass through districts under the Nestorian Patriarch's control. Indeed, the Sheikh's army has met with no serious interruption until their sad encounter with the Russians between Van and Bayazid.

We to-day dispatched a messenger with a letter to Sheikh Obeidoollah, thanking him for the protection he has afforded the Christians of Gawar, stating that we should mention the fact to yourself, and especially urging him to exert his utmost influence to prevent any collision between the two religions in the interior. We intimated to him the influential position Mr. Layard holds with the Sultan's Government, and suggested that his good offices to preserve harmony at this time would doubtless be appreciated by both Governments.

We should feel it our duty to communicate these facts at any rate, but do so the more readily as we learn through Mr. Easton of your wish for me to write to you.

I hope you will be able to lay in train measures which will intimidate the Koords from any hostile act towards the Christians, and also allay the Christians' fears.

Mar Shimon would doubtless be glad to have the Russians at Van, but is too politic, I am sure, to assume an attitude which might be construed as hostile to his own Government. Protection for himself and his people is the chief motive that controls him I believe.

Prompt measures, I should think, are demanded, as the situation is not likely to improve, and the war drags on as undecisively as hitherto.

Since I began to write, we have received a letter from our Chamachas at Selmas, with information by no means reassuring. The Shekkoik Koords, in defiance (?) of Ali Khan's commands, have joined the "jehad," sending 500 men towards Van. These, with a part of the Sheikh's army, as I understand it, have on their march sacked the Armenian town of Albak, with surrounding villages, stripped one or more churches, plundered the Christian shops in Bashkala, and passed on to serve the large Nestorian village of Sarra similarly. Mention is made of murders committed, but only one is specified. An Armenian, finding the Koords determined to carry off his young bride, he tried to shoot her, but killed a Koord instead, at which he was hacked to pieces and the bride carried off. It is stated that Sheikh Obeidoollah had given them permission to plunder at will.

I have just received, too, a letter from the Nestorian Metropolitan of Nohsea, the residence of Sheikh Obeidoollah. He begs to know what advice we can give him for the security of himself and fellow-Christians, in case the excitement of the Koords endangers a general massacre by their remaining.

It is probably known to you that the Sheikh's son is at Tabreez, at least he was, but what his relation is to the Persian authorities I do not know.

The Christians of Noshea would be glad of permission to move over into Merghewer if danger approaches.

Very sincerely yours,
(Signed) BENJ. LABAREE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 302.

Mr. Labaree to Consul Abbott.

Dear Sir, *Seir, June 16, 1877.*

A MESSENGER has just come in from Gawar with a letter from our preacher Kasha Oshana, of the district of Thoma, the contents of which we hasten to communicate to you. They are but a confirmation of the suspicions previously mentioned, but so direct and definite as to make it more urgent to relieve the Nestorians of those districts of the threatening storm.

Kasha Oshana writes that two Koords have notified to particular friends among the Thomians, on the most solemn oaths, that it is the plan of Sheikh Mohammed, of Banence, in the district of Amadeah, to assemble an army, not to fight the Russians, whose cannon they fear, but, seeking a pretext, would attack the Nestorians of Thoma and Jiary, charging that they refused to give them passage on their way to Van, and so excuse themselves to the Sultan's Government for their attack on the Christians, as also for not joining the fight with the Russians. The letter to us is dated the 10th of this month, and it was feared that in fifteen days after the above-named Sheikh would have collected his forces ready to move.

This Sheikh is the same who instigated Bedr Khan Beg to his terrible massacre thirty odd years ago. Six years ago again he formed a design of attacking the Christians of Thoma. This same Kasha Oshana notified to the late Mr. Rassam, who telegraphed to Baghdad, and the malicious purpose was frustrated. Kasha Oshana wishes to know if we will not promptly inform you, that you may telegraph to Constantinople, and possibly avert the evil.

The messenger reports Gawar in a most exposed and dangerous situation.

The Sheikh Obeidoolah has gone to Bashkalla; the Kaimakam is supported but by a few Zaptiehs. The Shekoik and other Koords are roving and plundering at will. It was understood that last night 300 Koords would attack Dizza, the Kaimakam's residence in Gawar, containing a large number of Armenians.

These Koords are bringing a vast amount of plunder to Persian villages from Albak and its surroundings.

Allow me to suggest that the only way of preventing the threatened massacre is to forbid the Koordish army from going through Tiary and Thoma. Such an attempt,

even on the part of Sheikh Mohammed, would excite the worst fears of the Nestorians, and lead to their resistance. A Koordish army once in those narrow defiles would have it all their own way.

Yours very respectfully,
(Signed) BENJ. LABAREE.

No. 303.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 78. Political.)
Scutari, July 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that Field-Marshal Suleiman Pasha and the whole of his Staff are now here, on their way to the Danube or to Asia Minor, and, it is said, forty-five battalions are following them from Podgoritza. The Turks will probably observe the defensive in North Albania.

Directions have been sent to the Herzegovina for the military to make no new contracts for provisions, &c.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 304.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 79. Political.)
Scutari, July 4, 1877.

My Lord,

IF your Lordship has received my telegrams sent by other routes your Lordship will already know that the Imperial authorities are apparently about to remain on the defensive in this country.

During a visit that I paid to Suleiman Pasha this day, and from what I gathered from his Excellency, I am inclined to believe that the Turkish Government may be now better disposed for listening to proposals for a suspension of hostilities with Montenegro. The recent experiences of that Principality, and the grave losses it has had to bear, may possibly make Prince Nicholas also desire peace. Neither of the parties, however, can know the ideas of the other on this subject; therefore I have not thought it inexpedient to lay before your Lordship the following suggestion:—

The Turks are about once more to send the remaining Indian corn to Montenegro, and, as I have been engaged in this matter, I could easily avail myself of this excuse and visit Cettigné, where, on an opportunity arising, I could make my belief known that Prince Nicholas would not find the Imperial authorities indisposed to come to an understanding with His Highness, and in this manner, perhaps, a door may be opened to put a stop to useless bloodshed.

I have had the honour of telegraphing the foregoing to Mr. Layard.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 305.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 81. Political.)
Scutari, July 7, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that this morning Suleiman Pasha sent to inquire of me whether I had received instructions from your Lordship with reference to the proposal contained in my telegram of the 4th instant, and I informed his Excellency that Mr. Layard had been consulted on the subject by your Lordship.

The Pasha has now caused me to infer that the Turkish Government, being anxious to avoid the semblance of being the first to seek an understanding with Montenegro, has furnished him with full powers to bring it about otherwise. He has

further acquainted me, in confidence, that he is of opinion that it is only by following the course already proposed that a satisfactory arrangement can be arrived at.

I mentioned in my despatch of the 4th instant, telegraphed by Budua, that in the Herzegovina the Turkish authorities had been ordered to enter into no new contracts for provisions, &c., for the military.

I had the honour of telegraphing the whole of the foregoing to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 306.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 82. Political.)
Scutari, July 8, 1877.

My Lord,

SULEIMAN PASHA, who is most anxious to come to an understanding with Montenegro for the negotiation of peace or the cessation of hostilities, has requested me to telegraph to your Lordship, although I may appear to be reiterating the information, and state that the Turkish Government having sent him three days ago full powers to act in the matter, he hopes I will be permitted to ascertain whether the Prince of Montenegro is also prepared to enter into the desired negotiations.

The Pasha is thus importunate as military exigencies are calling him in other quarters.

The withdrawal of nearly the whole of the regular force from this frontier will leave north Albania exposed, if peace is not made, both to the attacks of the Montenegrins and to the ravages of the Bashi-Bazouks who have been so thoughtlessly poured into it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

P.S.—The foregoing has also been telegraphed by me to Mr. Layard.

No. 307.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 83. Political.)
Scutari, July 8, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the day after the arrival of Suleiman Pasha in Scutari, the 4th instant, the troops forming the army with which he crossed Montenegro, commenced arriving here from Podgoritza by land, and were as rapidly marched towards Antivari. In three days all the forty-one battalions had reached and passed Scutari, as well as eight battalions of the 5th army corps, composed of Syrians, and which are to proceed with Suleiman Pasha's troops.

The whole of this force is now echeloned on the road to Antivari, and it is supposed it is awaiting transports to carry it either to the Dedeagh railway, near Enos, or to Constantinople.

Suleiman Pasha, as well as all his staff, profess ignorance as to their route and destination, and it is inferred they wish their movements to remain secret, as it is reported a Russian squadron is in the Mediterranean.

Numbers of irregulars are still arriving from Lower Albania, and of a more lawless class than have hitherto been brought to this frontier. If, as is probable, the course of the war against Russia renders necessary the entire withdrawal of the regular troops from north Albania, these Bashi-Bazouks will most likely turn from their so-called defence of the Ottoman territory and proceed to pillage the inhabitants and country they were assembled to help.

Field-Marshal Ali Saib Pasha and his staff are also at present in Scutari, and, I am told, only ten battalions now remain at Spuz and Podgoritza.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 308.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 84. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, July 8, 1877.*

MY telegrams of the last few days have shown your Lordship that the surmises expressed in my despatch No. 76, Political, of the 2nd instant, that the Turks were anxious to come to an understanding with Montenegro, were correct.

The fact that the expression of such a desire is tantamount to an admission of failure in the attempt to overcome Montenegro, has made Suleiman Pasha rather slow in explaining the length to which he is authorized to go to secure peace, and it was only this morning that he let me understand clearly that the Porte had instructed him to endeavour to be brought into communication with the Prince of Montenegro through the good offices of Her Majesty's Consul in Scutari, and that, once this point attained, his powers enabled him to carry on the negotiations direct.

Your Lordship will have probably gathered from the fact that my cyphered telegrams were permitted to pass freely through the Turkish telegraph offices that I was not transmitting merely my own appreciations of the wishes of the Turks. I feel, however, that the rather informal course adopted by the Turkish authorities has made me appear to have assumed duties which my Consular position hardly justifies, and I therefore solicit your Lordship's indulgence, as also that of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have not thought it necessary to inquire of Suleiman Pasha in what manner he hopes to succeed in coming to an understanding with Prince Nicholas, as I could give him no opinion on the value of the concessions he might be disposed to make; but perhaps His Highness would not decline to agree to a suspension of hostilities on the basis that the final settlement of the Turco-Montenegrin question should be made when peace is about to be concluded between Russia and Turkey.

As my telegrams contain fully all that Suleiman Pasha communicated to me, I will not trouble your Lordship here with a repetition of their terms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 309.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 85. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, July 8, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copies of two telegrams that have passed between the Prince of Montenegro's Secretary and me with regard to the resumed transport of the grain belonging to Montenegro by the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 309.

M. Duby to Consul Kirby Green.

(Telegraphic.) *Cettigné, July 4, 1877, 10 A.M.*

WROTE you yesterday. I suppose you know that your Commander-in-chief telegraphed last week to His Highness that he was anxious to forward the remaining corn, as it was rotting, and asked if he could forward it, and if we would answer for the boatmen's safety in the river. Reply was with thanks for expressed anxiety; that, for serious reasons, we could not allow navigation in the river, but that we should feel obliged by the supplies being sent to Budua, making ourselves liable for extra expenses. I am instructed to apply to your kindness in order to know what the authorities have decided. Best thanks beforehand for earliest possible reply.

Inclosure 2 in No. 309.

Consul Kirby Green to M. Duby.

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, July 4, 1877, 5·30 P.M.*

SULEIMAN PASHA informs me that he has with pleasure acceded to the arrangement about Budua, as his telegrams will have already informed you, and his Excellency trusts you will be able to receive the cargo of rye at some port on the lake.

No. 310.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 32. Political.)
My Lord, *Trebizond, July 5, 1877.*

INFORMATION from a very reliable source induces me to believe that the Turkish operations in the Caucasus may be considered to be virtually at an end, unless men, arms, and ammunition are forwarded to support the present expedition.

This seems to be also the opinion of the Turkish officers in the Caucasus, some of whom have lately returned to Constantinople.

The Abkasians have not been hitherto an element offering much reliance, not that they will not fight well at times, but they go away from, and come again to, the camp as it suits their fancy.

Of these and Circassians there were about 3,000, and most of the former have returned to their homes after the battle of Tshamshira.

All the forces remaining to carry on the operations in the Caucasus are the regulars, who were originally 7,000, and by sick and wounded are now reduced to 6,500. There is one battery of field artillery, and another of mountain train.

With similar means nothing can be done in the offensive, and were it not for the naval forces the Turks would not have been able to hold their ground, as it was proved in the battle of Tshamshira. Without the timely arrival of the "Assiri Chefker" and of the "Mahmoodié" the corps operating there would have been annihilated.

In addition to the above-mentioned ironclads, there are also the armour-plated corvette "Orhanié," a wooden frigate, an avviso, and a gunboat. These forces, although small, may be considered sufficient in the present deficient state of the Russian navy. But the landing forces require to be increased, and a somewhat regular organization to be introduced among the Abkasians.

The late successes of the Turkish arms in Asia by awakening hope and confidence offer a good opportunity for trying to do so, and to augment the number of the local volunteers.

I understand that the Abkasians who have left will return, and others will likely join them if Hassein Vasfi Pasha is replaced.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 311.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 34. Political.)
My Lord, *Trebizond, July 6, 1877.*

ABOUT three weeks ago messengers were forwarded during the night to inform the authorities at Kerassond that a steamer suspected to be Russian had been made out on the coast between that town and Tripoli.

The Cadi, who, in the absence of the Kaïmakam (called at Amasia to account for some lack in his conduct), was acting at the time, called the Mussulmans to arms, and kept for some time a fire of musketry as a signal for the populations of the surrounding villages to rush to the defence of the coast.

About 1,500 armed men answered the call during the night, and on the ensuing morning, but as no enemy was discovered, the Greeks and the Armenians of Kerassond, under the impression that the words freely used in the night, of killing the Ghiaours,

applied to them, strongly complained to the Governor-General of Amasia of the conduct of the Cadi, who was forthwith dismissed from his post.

If the Mussulmans had the intention of massacring the Christians of Kerassond, as the former were armed and in strong force, nothing could have prevented them from doing so.

I am the more inclined to assign no mischievous intentions to the Turks on that occasion, that, by a letter just received from our Consular Agent at Samsoun, I learn that the British brig "Elizabeth and Catherine," Lauer master, now in that port, was boarded, when off Synope on the 22nd ultimo, by a Russian steamer, to ascertain that she was not carrying contraband of war, a fact proving beyond a doubt the presence towards that time of Russian cruizers on the Turkish coast of the Black Sea. The steamer in question is described by the master of the "Elizabeth and Catherine" as being very fast, of middle size, painted white, and manned with a numerous crew.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 312.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 32. Political.)
My Lord, *Adrianople, July 5, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith the copies of two despatches with their inclosures, which I addressed to Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert, of Philippopolis, respecting statements connected with that sandjak which have appeared in the Vienna correspondence of the "Times" of London, and in the Adrianople correspondence of the "Courrier d'Orient" of Constantinople.

From Mr. Calvert's despatch, a copy of which I beg also to inclose, your Lordship will observe that there is no foundation whatever for the statement made by the "Times'" correspondent, and that the occurrence related in the "Courrier d'Orient" has been exaggerated.

I take this opportunity to call your Lordship's notice to the following paragraph, which I quote from the Constantinople correspondence of the "Standard" of the 18th of June:—

"Sofia has been placed in a state of siege, as the attitude of the Bulgarians is very hostile. Redif Pasha appears to wish to drive the Bulgarians to extremities. He has issued an order that all Russian subjects and all Bulgarians who are in the service of the Porte shall at once quit the country."

I beg to point out that, as stated in my despatch to your Lordship No. 22 of the 13th ultimo, Sofia was placed under martial law in consequence of the presence of Panslave revolutionary agents at that place. I have not heard of any hostile attitude on the part of the Bulgarian population there. The statement that an order has been issued for the expulsion from Turkey of Bulgarians in the service of the Porte is absolutely without foundation. Such Bulgarians are not only allowed to remain in the country, but their status as Turkish employés has been left unchanged. I may add, moreover, that Russian subjects and protégés are permitted to stay in the country, and are well treated by the Turkish authorities and population, even in places at a distance from any foreign Consulate. For instance, at Kirk Kilissia eleven Russian subjects reside and carry on business now as heretofore. The statement in question is probably a distortion of the fact that, as a precautionary measure, orders have been received to dismiss any Russian or Roumanian subjects employed on the Roumelian railway. Only one railway employé came under the operation of this order at Adrianople, and in that instance the Roumanian (M. Costa) whom it affected was allowed to retain his post on his spontaneous request to become an Ottoman subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 312.

Consul Blunt to Acting Consul Calvert.

Sir, *Adrianople, June 26, 1877.*

THE following paragraph occurs in a letter which the "Times" newspaper publishes from its correspondent at Vienna under date of the 10th instant.

"800 Circassians are reported to have been sent to Tatar-Bazardjik to be distributed among the Bulgarian villages, in order to repress any attempt at insurrection."

I have to request you to ascertain and inform me what truth there may be in that statement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 312.

Consul Blunt to Acting Consul Calvert.

Sir, *Adrianople, June 27, 1877.*

I HAVE to request you to ascertain and report to me what truth there is in the statement contained in the inclosed extract from the "Courrier d'Orient" of the 25th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 3 in No. 312.

Extract from the "Courrier d'Orient" of June 20, 1877.

ON nous écrit d'Andrinople, le 20 Juin:—

"M. James Long, dont je vous avais annoncé le passage par Andrinople, est parti ces jours-ci pour Tatar-Bazarjik avec sa sœur, Lady Lesley. A leur arrivée dans cette ville, un hideux spectacle s'est offert à leurs yeux; le cadavre d'un Bulgare et plusieurs autres individus de la même nationalité, plus ou moins grièvement blessés et couverts de sang, gisaient sur le sol à proximité de la gare. Informations prises, on apprit que la vache d'un des Bulgares ayant causé des dégats dans le champ d'un Turc, ce dernier s'était pris de querelle avec le propriétaire de l'animal, et que d'autres Turcs et Bulgares étant intervenus, il y avait eu combat avec résultat tragique.

"Le conflit aurait pu prendre des proportions beaucoup plus considérables sans la prompte et énergique intervention du Caïmacam Halil Bey et de quelques zaptiés."

Inclosure 4 in No. 312.

Acting Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Sir, *Philippopolis, July 2, 1877.*

HAVING been absent from the town of Philippopolis since the 27th ultimo, I had the honour to receive your despatches of the 26th and 27th ultimo only to-day on my return.

With reference to the report mentioned by the Vienna correspondent of the "Times," that 800 Circassians have been sent to Tatar-Bazardjik to be distributed among the Bulgarian villages, I am happily able to state that it is utterly without foundation; nor, as far as I can learn, is there at present the slightest intention on the part of the Turkish authorities to any such means of anticipating the unlikely eventuality of a fresh attempt at insurrection.

As regards the tragical event reported by the Adrianople correspondent of the "Courrier d'Orient," the case was of less importance than the correspondent makes it out to be. I had ascertained and was about to report to you the details when I had the honour to receive your Circular of the 13th ultimo instructing me only to report

specially and at the time, disorders of special importance. The facts of this case were as follows:—

On the 11th ultimo, a party of Bulgarian peasants belonging to the Sofia district were proceeding from Stanimachi to Sofia with some cartloads of wine. Just outside the town of Tatar-Bazardjik they unyoked their oxen in order to let them graze. A Turkish Koroudji, or rural guard, named Fehim, however, came up to them, and, saying they were trespassing on private pasture grounds, demanded of the peasants a small fine for the offence. One of the Bulgarians, named Manologlu Gato, demurring to this, the Koroudji drew a pistol and shot him dead, and likewise wounded severely with his knife two other of the peasants who ran up to interfere. The remaining Bulgarians, fifteen in number, fled.

No retaliation was sought by them; consequently, there was no conflict between Turks and Bulgarians, or intervention on the part of the Kaïmakam.

Some Bulgarians of Bazardjik, hearing that Mr. James Long was to arrive that day, purposely, I am told, placed the body of the murdered man by the road-side near the railway station, in order that that gentleman might have ocular proof of the lawlessness and barbarity of the Turks.

The murderer was arrested on the same or the next day, and is now in prison at Philippopolis, his guilt having been conclusively established by the examination which he underwent at Tatar-Bazardjik.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 313.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 33. Political.)
Adrianople, July 5, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship copies of despatches from Mr. Vice-Consul Willshire of Dédéagatch, and Mr. Vice-Consul Odoni, of Gallipoli, relative to the state of their districts.

Your Lordship will observe that both reports agree in bearing testimony to the tranquil and unaggressive attitude observed towards the Christians by the Mussulmans, with the notable exception, however, in the case of Gallipoli, of the Circassians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 313.

Mr. Willshire to Consul Blunt.

Dédéagatch, July 2, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, since my last despatch of the 12th ultimo, nothing has occurred in this district worth mentioning. Public peace has been undisturbed, and I have not heard of any act of oppression or fanaticism on the part of the Turks towards their Christian fellow-subjects.

No news has been received of the Greek vessel "Taxiarchis," Captain Marco Sofkidhis, which it was reported had been sunk by the Turkish man-of-war "Medari Zafer," for having on board contraband goods, so the report is believed to be true.

The brigands who entered the village of Maronia and carried off one of the principal inhabitants named Thoma, have not been captured, nor is it known where they are, or what has become of Thoma and the two captive zaptiehs. It is said that Petko is at the head of this band, and that he, having heard that several persons had been put in prison by the Kaïmakam of Gumurdjina on suspicion of having had a hand in the business, wrote to the Kaïmakam to say that those persons were innocent, and that if he did not set them free at once, Thoma and the two zaptiehs would be put to death. This report comes from Enos, and I hardly believe it to be true.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LEONARD WM. WILLSHIRE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 313.

M. Odoni to Consul Blunt.

Gallipoli, le 2 Juillet, 1877.

M. le Consul,

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que pendant le mois de Juin la tranquillité publique n'a pas été troublée, dans la circonscription de ce Vice-Consulat, par des actes de violence ou autre contre les Chrétiens de la part de la population Musulmane, qui puissent être attribués à l'esprit de fanatisme ou bien à quelques desseins politiques.

Les Circassiens seulement ont donné de graves motifs de plainte tant sous le rapport de vols que sous celui des actes de violence commis au détriment de la population Chrétienne.

J'ai constaté que cette peuplade commet toutes sortes de crimes contre les Chrétiens avec un esprit de fanatisme très-prononcé avec la plus grande insouciance et avec la presque certitude de l'impunité. Il paraît qu'effectivement l'impunité leur est assurée, puisqu'après tant de crimes et de vols commis par eux il n'y en a pas un seul qui soit écroué dans les prisons.

Il n'y a pas d'indices, pour le moment, qui puissent faire supposer que la tranquillité publique pourra être troublée. La population Turque est plutôt morne depuis qu'elle a appris que les Russes ont franchi le Danube en plusieurs endroits, mais cependant il n'y a pas d'abattement, et l'on croit encore à la possibilité d'une victoire.

Le bruit que les Anglais viendront à Gallipoli prend ici plus de consistance de jour en jour, et je suis, pour ainsi dire, assiégé par les Turcs, qui prétendent que moi j'en sais quelque chose, mais que je ne veux rien dire. J'ai beau leur dire que je ne sais absolument rien, c'est comme si je prêchais dans le désert.

Il y a mécontentement général de la part des Chrétiens pour la mauvaise administration, et pour les injustices qui se commettent à leur égard.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) A. ODONI.

No. 314.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 34. Political.)
Adrianople, July 7, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship a satisfactory report which Mr. Dupuis has addressed to me to-day respecting the state of his Vice-Consular district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 314.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Adrianople, July 7, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Circular despatch of the 13th ultimo, I have the honour to report that, notwithstanding the anxiety and uneasiness of the popular mind, strained during the last few months by political events, as well as by the undue recurrence of acts of lawlessness on the part of marauding Circassians and others, and I fear also, in some instances, of Christians, together with the groundless fear lest those acts of violence would increase, now finds some relief in the knowledge that that state of affairs as regards this province has almost ceased to exist.

Indeed, with a great war on hand, and in close proximity to Adrianople, together with the belief in the presence of numerous emissaries, it is a remarkable fact that the last month has been a period of almost complete tranquillity and freedom from excesses, no fresh outrages or disturbances of any importance having come to the knowledge of the local Government, or reported to this Office.

It is true that isolated instances of pillage and murder have, up to within recent dates, been of frequent occurrence, but experience has shown me, and I may safely venture to say they were invariably exaggerated and distorted by designing persons. Those acts were mostly outbursts of private vengeance in no way attributable to any

spirit of religious fanaticism or political intrigue on the part of the Turks, and I need scarcely add, entirely unsupported or sanctioned by the local Government, which, it is only bare justice to record, they anxiously and earnestly endeavoured to repress.

I am not in a position to speak positively as to the aspect of affairs beyond Adrianople, the limit of this Vice-Consular district, but having recently visited the country about Mustafa-Pasha, Tchirpan, Eski-Zaara, Kyzylagatch, Kirkklissia, and Demotika in connection with outrages in those localities, it appeared to me that the authorities of those places (with the exception of the Kaimakam of Kyzylagatch, since dismissed the service for having maltreated a Christian) were fully imbued with a sense of the responsibilities attaching to the importance of their maintaining order and tranquillity in their respective districts.

I take this opportunity of recording that, notwithstanding the presence in Adrianople the last few days of large bodies of military, including some hundreds of Circassian cavalry, their conduct during their stay was irreproachable and elicited general admiration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

No. 315.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 735. Secret.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July 5*, 1877.

THE Sultan having sent Said Pasha to ask me to see him, I waited upon His Majesty yesterday. His Majesty received me in his usual kind and courteous manner. He said that he had heard with great satisfaction that Her Majesty's fleet had arrived at Besika Bay. Was he to look upon its presence there, he asked, in a favourable or unfavourable light? I told him that I could not answer this question, as I was not authorized by Her Majesty's Government to make any communication to him on the subject. His Majesty perceiving at once that I was unwilling to enter upon the matter, made no further inquiries.

The Sultan then said that he wished to speak to me about Bulgaria. He referred to the Proclamation of the Emperor of Russia to the Bulgarian Christians, which, he said, could only be considered as a declaration to the world that Bulgaria was to be taken from him and annexed to the Russian Empire. The Russians, His Majesty went on to say, had brought an immense number of guns, which they were distributing, with ten rounds of ammunition for each, to the Christians, calling upon them to rise against him, and threatening with death those that refused to do so. These proceedings could only lead to very grave results to the Christians themselves, whom it was his most earnest desire to protect. He thought, therefore, of issuing a counter-Proclamation, of which he had made a sketch for communication to his Ministers, and which he would read to me in strict confidence. His Majesty then took a sheet of paper from his pocket, and desired Said Pasha (who alone was present) to translate to me, word for word, what he had written. It was to the following effect:—That His Majesty was resolved to govern the Bulgarians with perfect justice and equality, and to ensure to them complete religious freedom, security for their property, and constitutional institutions; that the Power which was attempting to seduce them from their allegiance to their Sovereign could offer no such advantages, as all the world knew that there was neither religious nor political liberty in Russia, but that the Russian rule was a cruel despotism; that if the Bulgarians were to listen to Russia they would be rebels to their Sovereign, and would be so treated, every man taken in arms being liable to be hanged; that, as he wished to protect the innocent and weak, all old men, women, and children might retire into the district defended by the forts of Shumla and Varna; and that the strictest orders should be given to his troops to respect the persons and property of the Christians.

After Said Pasha had translated the paper, which was of some length, and in the Sultan's own handwriting, His Majesty asked me my opinion of it. I replied that I thought His Majesty was quite right in issuing a Proclamation to the Bulgarians, assuring them of his desire and intention to govern them well and justly, and to afford them full protection for their persons and property; I would only venture to advise His Majesty very urgently to avoid using language unnecessarily irritating to the Russians, or threats to the Christians who might join them, which might be open

to misconstruction, and lead to retaliation. It appeared to me, I said, that his Proclamation should rather be an encouragement to those who were faithful to him than a menace to those who might be seduced from their duty; that it should, in fact, be addressed to the good rather than to the bad. His Majesty replied that he approved of my advice; that what he had written, and had shown me in strict confidence, gave merely a general idea of what he wished to say; and that he should direct his Ministers to put it into shape. He had given the Bulgarian Exarch personally, he observed, his royal word that the Bulgarians should enjoy the most complete religious and political freedom. He had authorized the Exarch to print his words, and to circulate them throughout Bulgaria. This was now being done. His Majesty added that he had the most kindly feeling towards his Bulgarian subjects; that they were quiet, industrious, and loyal people; and that he employed many hundreds of them upon his farms, and was entirely satisfied with them. Should it please God to bring this war to an end, he intended to visit Bulgaria himself, and to do his utmost for the good of the people. They had been corrupted by priests and schoolmasters, who had been brought up in Russia, and were afterwards used as her political agents to mislead the people and to incite them to rebellion. He would establish schools in Bulgaria, so that it would no longer be necessary for the Bulgarians to go to Russia for their education. He attributed the present state of affairs to the neglectful and perverse policy of previous Governments. "The ancient policy of Turkey," he remarked, "was based upon friendship and alliance with England. In an evil hour that policy was abandoned, and one of my predecessors was induced to turn to Russia. This is the origin and cause of all that is now befalling us."

The Sultan then spoke of the outrages attributed to the Russians in Armenia and Circassia, to the unnecessary bombardment of the town of Rustchuk, during which a large number of innocent persons, chiefly Christians, were killed, and to the alleged proceedings of Russian agents in instigating the Christians to massacre the Mussulmans in Bulgaria. He said that he had directed his Ministers to call the attention of the European Powers to these and other acts of barbarity and outrage, which far exceeded those stated to have been committed by Bashi-Bazouks, in suppressing the insurrection in Bulgaria. It would be for Europe to judge who were the real "barbarians." But, His Majesty went on to say, if Russia persisted in this course, he could not be responsible for the results. Could it be expected that the Turkish soldiers and the Mahommedan populations would view with indifference the slaughter of their brethren? Anxious and determined as he was to prevent acts of retaliation and revenge, the feeling of the Mussulmans might become too strong to be repressed.

After some further conversation on these matters, the Sultan repeatedly alluding to the atrocities attributed to the Russians, which appear to have made a deep impression upon him, and of which he spoke with much indignation, we talked about the Chambers. I was glad to have an opportunity of saying something to him on the subject. I observed that I had learnt with regret that attempts were being made to set him against his Parliament, and to lead him to believe that it was an institution dangerous to his authority and to the country. I earnestly hoped, I said, that he would not listen to such counsels. Whether it was wise or not to confer upon Turkey a Constitution and a Parliament at the moment they were proclaimed, it was unnecessary now to discuss. As he had of his own free will given those institutions to his Empire, he must now for his own honour and credit's sake ensure their success. I observed that, whilst a despotic Sovereign enjoyed unlimited power, he was at the same time alone responsible for what might happen to his country and people; whereas a Constitutional Sovereign, in return for a diminution of that absolute authority, had the immense advantage of being able to appeal to the country, of having it with him, and, consequently, of not incurring individual responsibility. These considerations would, I said, be of the utmost importance when the time came, which it must do sooner or later, for making a peace. He could then, relying upon the advice of his Parliament as representing the country, accede to terms which, of his own authority and on his own responsibility, he might find it difficult to accept.

The Sultan listened with great attention, and seemed to be struck with what I had said to him.

He replied with much vivacity that as he had himself of his own free will given Constitutional institutions and a Parliament to his Empire, he was bound in honour to support and maintain them inviolate. He had formed the opinion that it was absolutely necessary that Constitutional institutions should be extended to Turkey long before he came to the throne. It was the only way, he had convinced himself, of reconciling and amalgamating the various races and creeds of which the Empire was

composed. He had himself urged the calling together of the Parliament upon Midhat Pasha, and had insisted against the strong opposition of that Minister, that Ahmid Vefyk Pasha should be the President of the Chamber. He had made this appointment because he had a high opinion of Ahmid Vefyk Pasha's honesty, independence of character, and loyalty, although he must admit, he observed jokingly, that the Pasha was somewhat obstinate, and too much inclined to have his own way. But, His Majesty said, a small number of men who had been to Paris, who dressed in the French fashion with bright neckties and polished boots, and had revolutionary ideas of equality and what not—who were in fact "tchapkuns," (*i.e.*, scamps) without religion or morality, had endeavoured to make use of the Chamber for bad purposes, and had employed the name of his brother, Murad Effendi, and that of Midhat Pasha to undermine his authority and to upset his Ministers. To this end they had contrived the recent demonstration of the Softas, which had compelled him to proclaim the state of siege, but had in no way altered his views as to the Parliament, which he was resolved to respect, maintain, and support.

I observed that I ventured to think that the proclamation of a state of siege was not a wise or necessary measure, and that if I had been consulted with respect to it I should have strongly advised against it. It was giving far too much importance to the demonstration of the Softas to which he had alluded, and led people to think that there was more danger than there really was. The Parliament, I added, had committed some mistakes, but considering that it had met for the first time, and that the men who sat in it were brought from all parts of the Empire, and were absolutely without experience and knowledge of the nature of a representative Chamber, its success had been far beyond what persons best acquainted with the country could possibly have expected. And as for opposition, I said, the more of it the better for his own interests and those of the country, so long as it was kept within constitutional bounds. It proved to the world that the members of the Chambers were allowed perfect freedom of speech, and that the Parliament was not, after all, a sham.

The Sultan acquiesced, observing that he had no wish to complain of, or interfere with, fair criticism and opposition. On the contrary, he desired to encourage them. They were especially useful and important in questions of finance. "A Constantinopolitan baktal" (grocer), His Majesty said, "keeps a very dirty book, where he enters his accounts in a way that nobody understands, not even himself. When he sends his bill to a customer it appears excessive, and is disputed. They quarrel, and the dirty book is referred to; no one can make head or tail of it, and in the end the customer is cheated. Such is the case with our Budget. Now I want the Parliament to look into our dirty book, and to see if it can't introduce some order into it, so that the country may not be cheated."

His Majesty was in very good spirits in consequence of the favourable news that he had received from Armenia. He appeared to me better in health than when I last saw him, and spoke sometimes with a decision and determination that confirmed the opinion that I have already expressed to your Lordship of him. He seemed particularly anxious to impress upon me that he was not under the influence of the persons in the palace against whom public opinion is directed, and that there was no fear of his being guided by their counsels. He has certainly shown, during the last few days, an unexpected firmness in ordering Redif Pasha off at once to Shumla, in directing Mahmoud Damad Pasha to attend to his affairs at Tophana instead of spending his time in the palace, and in commanding his Ministers to move from their villas on the Bosphorus to their houses in Constantinople, so that their whole time may be given to the public business. It is to be hoped that this firmness may not turn into obstinacy. There may be some danger of it, as I observe that when the Sultan has formed an opinion it is by no means easy to shake it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 316.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 736.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 5, 1877.*

THE Sultan asked me yesterday, at a private audience, to request Her Majesty's Government to ascertain, through Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh, whether the Turkish prisoners of war were properly treated. His Majesty said that

he had given express orders that the Russian prisoners of war in Turkey who, he had reason to believe, were more numerous than the Turkish in Russia, were to receive every kindness and consideration, that they should be properly fed, and that the officers should be treated according to their respective ranks at his expense.

His Majesty added that he made this appeal to Her Majesty's Government as they had kindly promised to take Turkish subjects in Russia under their protection during the war.

I told His Majesty that I would transmit his request to your Lordship, and that through your Lordship's intervention the Russian Government had already consented to the departure of sixty-three Turkish subjects who had been detained in Georgia, and who would return to Turkey as soon as the Porte had given the necessary directions for their reception.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 317.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 737. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 6, 1877.*

THE well-known Hungarian General Klapka, who enjoys much consideration at the Porte, leaves Constantinople to-day for Vienna and Pesth. I understand that his object in returning to Hungary is to endeavour to stimulate the feeling of his fellow-countrymen, and to promote an Austrian policy in favour of Turkey and against Russia. The Porte looks to Hungary as likely to give her efficient support in the present war, and is encouraged to do so by the reports it receives thence of the sympathy of the Hungarian people for the Turkish cause, and of their dread of the advance of Russia to the south of the Danube.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 318.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 738. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 7, 1877.*

I HAVE obtained the copy of a further letter with reference to the attitude of Hungary and of the revolutionary party in Poland in regard to Turkey, which has been communicated to the Sultan. I have the honour to inclose it. As I have already stated to your Lordship, I am not in a position to ascertain how far the statements contained in these letters can be relied upon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 318.

Letter communicated to His Majesty the Sultan respecting the Attitude of Hungary, and of the Revolutionary Party in Poland, in regard to Turkey.

Mon cher Ami, *Vienne, ce 29 Juin, 1877.*

LA situation s'accentue de plus en plus dans le même sens que je nous indique dans mes lettres. L'Autriche se prépare à marcher militairement même avec la Russie. Les détails de ces préparatifs vous les recevrez en même temps que cette lettre mais par une autre entremise. Je vous supplie de ne pas tarder de m'informer par la dite entremise si vous tenez à ces informations, car sans cela il me sera complètement impossible d'en obtenir la suite.

En attendant notre Gouvernement fera tous les efforts possibles à ne pas trahir sa pensée intime tout en préparant le terrain dans le pays pour ne pas se heurter contre une forte opposition le jour où il sera amené à manifester publiquement son

alliance avec la Russie. La dernière discussion de la question d'Orient qui a eu lieu hier et aujourd'hui dans la Chambre de Pesth vous fait voir très claire cette politique en Hongrie. Le discours de M. Tizsa n'a aucune importance. Il ne se compose que de mensonges destinés à calmer les esprits. Mais tous les discours des orateurs du parti Conservateur indiquent bien évidemment que c'est ce même parti qui s'apprête à servir de pont à la Hongrie à le transporter dans le camp du parti de la Cour partisant de la Russie, à approuver la politique Russe de l'Autriche, à former en cas de besoin un nouveau Ministère, et à en prendre la responsabilité. Qui ne connait pas les intrigues secrètes qui se trament depuis plus de six mois entre le dit parti Conservateur Hongrois dirigé par le Baron Sennery et la Cour, y compris le parti militaire Autrichien, était tout ébahi des déclarations de MM. Kalley et Hirmenyi, speakers du parti de M. Sennery, par lesquelles ils disent que l'Autriche n'est nullement obligée à sauvegarder l'intégrité de la Turquie (juste le contraire de ce qu'ils disaient jusqu'à présent), que les Slavs du sud ne sont pas partisans de la Russie, et qu'ils ne demandent qu'à se rallier à l'Autriche (mais pas à la Hongrie), et que comme la Russie convoite depuis 1,000 années la possession de Constantinople, et qu'elle n'en demandera jamais, il vaut mieux qu'elle la prenne maintenant et que l'Autriche n'a que veiller pour qu'elle y trouve sa compensation. M. Kalley, ancien Consul à Belgrade, qui est désigné à être Gouverneur-Général de Bosnie, y a parlé du reste un peu dans son propre intérêt, mais je peux vous assurer, et cela m'est confirmé par mes amis du Ministère, que son discours tout entier a été revisé et approuvé par M. Andrassy lui-même avant qu'il ne fût prononcé à la Chambre. Voila quelle est la vraie situation de la Hongrie. Les meneurs de ce pays se familiarisent doucement avec les idées d'annexion; ils abandonnent leur politique traditionnelle, et au lieu de faire opposition à la politique Russe de la Cour, ils s'empressent de mettre la main sur le pouvoir dans les provinces qu'ils se proposent d'annexer.

Malgré cette docilité de la Hongrie je puis vous en assurer aussi, la Cour se méfie de ce pays, et elle vient de passer un Traité additionnel secret avec la Russie, par lequel cette Puissance garantit à l'Autriche la possession de tous les pays de la Couronne de Hongrie pour tous les cas, et s'oblige à lui prêter main forte en cas de révolution. Le Traité, dont j'ai eu hier la première information, vient d'être signé pendant la présence de l'Empereur à Plocsti.

Quelles sont les pensées intimes de M. Andrassy je n'en sais pas plus long que tout le monde. Mais ceci est un fait qu'il marche avec le parti Conservateur de la Hongrie. S'il ira jusqu'au delà du jour où l'Autriche se déclarera pour la Russie c'est difficile de deviner. Moi de ma part je l'en crois capable. Hier et avant-hier l'on a beaucoup parlé, ou plutôt reparlé, de son remplacement par M. Zichy, mais je n'y crois pas. M. Andrassy ira jusqu'au bout, et il ne sera renvoyé par l'Empereur que le jour où il aura complètement perdu le terrain en Hongrie, et se trouvera désavoué même par le parti Conservateur, ou bien où la Russie alliée ouvertement à l'Autriche imposera son renvoi à l'Empereur.

Pour ce qui concerne l'Autriche proprement dite, notamment son Parlement, il s'y forme aussi depuis quelques jours un parti sous la direction de M. Giskra, qui se propose de protéger l'annexion. Les interpellations qui viennent d'être adressées par cette Chambre au Gouvernement au sujet de la question d'Orient seront suivies d'une discussion, et dans cette discussion se manifestera le courant pour l'annexion. Giskra est, comme vous savez, partisan de la Russie. Mais si et jusqu'à quel point il s'est inspiré par la Chancellerie Prussienne à provoquer et à nourrir le courant, à l'heure qu'il est, je n'ai pas d'informations.

La semaine passée, en causant longuement et à plusieurs reprises avec Aleko Pacha, je lui ai fait communication de toutes mes informations sur les questions du jour. Or, comme il m'a dit qu'il les enverra directement je les passe sous silence, et j'arrive aux affaires Polonaises.

A la fin de la semaine passée deux Polonais sont arrivés à Vienne, mais seulement pour y voir plusieurs de leurs compatriotes, et ils sont allés à Zurich et à Paris pour régler les affaires de l'émigration. Ils sont venus me voir, et ils m'ont dit que pour provoquer un mouvement national, et par conséquent sympathique à la Turquie, dans les provinces Polonaises sujettes à la Russie, l'on n'a pas besoin d'envoyer d'agents. Tout y est préparé. Il y a déjà un comité secret à Varsovie, qui a ses affiliations dans toutes les grandes villes de province; ce comité s'occupe avant tout à travailler l'opinion du pays pour pouvoir en disposer au moment et au but opportun, et pour le moment il limite son activité pratique à envoyer des agitateurs et des fonds aux soldats Polonais servant dans l'armée Russe, pour les déterminer à déserter du moment qu'ils auront touché le territoire Turc. Les fonds nécessaires à ce travail, qui n'est pas trop

couteux, n'y manquent pas; et ce qu'ils demandent c'est seulement qu'un Polonais de distinction et bien accrédité vienne à Varsovie pour y déclarer, en vertu de ses propres rapports avec le Gouvernement Turc, que les déserteurs Polonais seront parfaitement reçus en Turquie. Cependant ce dont ils se plaignent c'est la complète immobilité de la Gallicie et des provinces Polonaises appartenant à la Prusse. Aussi suppliaient-ils de commencer le travail national dans ce pays, et notamment en Gallicie, qui est le seul pays capable de servir de base d'opérations aux provinces Polonaises sujettes à la Russie. De même que la Gallicie ne saura se raviver avant d'avoir reçu le mot d'ordre de Varsovie, le Royaume de Pologne ne peut rien faire sans avoir la certitude d'avoir un appui en la Gallicie si le mot d'ordre est donné; mais ce qui manque c'est l'initiative, sans laquelle la Gallicie ne bouge pas, n'ayant pas encore ni de centre d'agitation ni de fonds indispensables à ce travail.

Les informations ci-dessus qui m'ont été données par ces messieurs de Varsovie font entrevoir bien claire que tandis que l'agitation se trouve visiblement facilitée par l'initiative prise à Varsovie, les frais du travail à initier en Gallicie se trouve aussi diminués.

Un autre agent Polonais, arrivé hier de Varsovie, m'a apporté la grave nouvelle que des détachements d'insurgés commencent déjà à se former dans les grandes forêts de la Lithuanie. Ils se composent principalement de déserteurs et de recrues Polonais qui s'y sont sauvés. Mais ces détachements paraissent être parfaitement organisés et commandés par un pouvoir secret établi par les habitants du pays, car les paysans et les grands propriétaires leur fournissent régulièrement des provisions.

Si la Gallicie ne tarde pas à se reveiller et à donner un signe de vie en manifestant publiquement ses sentiments nationaux et sympathiques à la Turquie toutes les provinces Polonaises sujettes à la Russie perdront immédiatement courage à se dresser contre la Russie. Dans la situation actuelle où la Turquie est évidemment abandonnée par toutes les Puissances Européennes, où même la Hongrie commence à abandonner ses sentiments qui la rangeaient du côté de la Turquie, la Pologne est le seul allié de l'Empire Ottoman, parceque les intérêts de ces deux pays son parfaitement identiques. Aussi un mouvement national en Pologne ne peut-il que profiter dans tous les cas à la Turquie, car si la Russie perd les premières batailles en voyant une insurrection se préparer en Pologne elle n'aura pas le courage de continuer la guerre, et si elle est victorieuse elle sera encore plus inclinée à faire la paix en sentant la chaleur du feu qu'on lui menace d'allumer derrière son dos, même dans le cas où la Russie eut un Traité avec la Prusse par lequel cette dernière est obligée d'occuper le Royaume en cas d'un mouvement révolutionnaire, elle réfléchira deux fois avant d'admettre l'occupation, que toute Puissance évite même au prix de sacrifices. La Sublime Porte fera ce qu'elle voudra, mais je ne peux m'abstenir de mon grand étonnement de ce qu'elle tarde encore d'y reconnaître le grand avantage qui résulterait pour elle seulement d'une position manifeste contre la Russie prise par la Pologne.

Il m'arrive à la dernière heure la grande nouvelle que notre Ministre de la Guerre s'est mis à élaborer un plan de mobilisation, partie nord, ce qui indique que notre Gouvernement se prépare aussi à parer un conflit éventuel avec la Prusse. Cela ne prouve du reste que jusqu'à quel point il est lié avec la Russie.

No. 319.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 739.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 7, 1877.

WITH reference to Mr. Vivian's despatch to your Lordship No. 180, Political, of the 14th ultimo, respecting another prayer offered up in the mosques in Egypt against the Infidels, I directed Dragoman Marinitch to endeavour to obtain some information on the subject from the Porte. He now states to me that the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has been authorized to declare to him, in the most formal manner, that no special prayer whatever has been recited or read in the mosques directed against the Christians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 320.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 741.)

Therapia, July 7, 1877.

My Lord,

ACHMET AGHA, Metto Bektash, and other Mussulmans condemned to death and to other punishments for the part they took last year in the outrages upon the Bulgarian Christians, have been brought to Constantinople. I directed Mr. Sandison to inquire at the Porte as to its intentions with regard to them, and I have been assured by Safvet Pasha that the promises given to me will be fulfilled, and that they will be sent to Africa, I believe to Benghazi, to be imprisoned there with forced labour.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 321.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 742.)

Therapia, July 9, 1877.

My Lord,

ON receiving your Lordship's telegram of the 6th instant, asking my opinion as regards a proposal made by Consul Kirby Green in a telegram of the 4th instant (copy of which was transmitted to me), that he should proceed to Montenegro with a view to expressing his belief in a most guarded manner that the Turks were disposed to treat with the Prince, and thus making an opening for bringing to an end a useless effusion of blood, I requested Mr. Sandison to endeavour to ascertain indirectly whether the Turkish Government were disposed to come to an arrangement with the Principality, and to bring the war with it to an end. Mr. Sandison, judging from the language held at the Porte with respect to Montenegro, reported to me that he was disposed to think that they were. His report confirmed an impression that I had already formed to the same effect from the language held to me by some of the Ministers, who are desirous of recalling a large part of the troops employed against Montenegro, and of sending them where, at this moment, they might be more useful. An order for the withdrawal of forty battalions and for their transfer to Rumelia has already, I am told, been given. The Porte is also under the apprehension that the Austrian Government is prepared to interfere if the Turkish troops threaten to overrun the whole Principality, and it is unwilling to have any difference with Austria on the subject.

Under these circumstances I see no objection to Mr. Kirby Green ascertaining, through personal communication with the Prince of Montenegro, whether he would be disposed to come to terms with the Porte, and to bring the war to an end through Mr. Green's mediation. For many reasons it might be useful and politic that an offer of mediation should come from England. But I cannot speak with certainty as to the inclination of the Turkish Government to avail themselves of it. However, the telegram from Mr. Green of the 8th instant, referring to his communications with Suleiman Pasha, would lead to the belief that the latter has been authorized to entertain proposals for peace that might come through Her Majesty's Consul.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 322.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 743. Most Confidential.)

Therapia, July 9, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of a letter addressed to me by Said Pasha, the Chief of the Sultan's military household, by order of His Majesty, and of telegrams which he transmitted to me.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 322.

Said Pasha to Mr. Layard.

(Translation.)

Yildiz Kiosk, July 7, 1877.

Sir,

FROM the inclosed telegrams, your Excellency will be able to see to what extent the Austrian military authorities are lending help and encouragement to insurrection in the Sultan's dominions. His Majesty feels certain, however, that Her Majesty's Government have no knowledge of these proceedings on the part of the officers of a friendly Power; for, had they been known to it, His Majesty has no doubt representations would have been made to the Austro-Hungarian Government, inasmuch as Europe cannot be expected to allow such acts to aggravate the present situation.

There would hardly seem to be any difference between them and the unjustifiable conduct of the Russians during the Servian war.

We believed Russia alone capable of acting as she did, but Austria, too, seems to have fallen into her ways; and we see, at the same time, that the principles of international law, which were held to be so sacred in the eyes of Europe, have now been completely set aside.

His Majesty would be glad if your Excellency will communicate the substance of the said telegrams to Her Majesty's Government, the more so as the insurrection which is planned will undoubtedly bring death and misery upon the innocent, such as children, women, and old men, and place at the same time the country in great danger. Under the circumstances, the Imperial Government could not well help taking severe measures for suppressing the insurrection, and chastising its authors.

Any bloodshed which must result from it cannot fail to be repulsive to English feeling, and His Majesty hopes, therefore, that a friendly representation, at your Excellency's recommendation, from Her Majesty's Government to the Cabinet of Austria, might prevent it.

In hopes that your Excellency will favour me with your views on this occasion, I remain, &c.

(Signed) SAID.

Inclosure 2 in No. 322.

Substance of information furnished to the Vali of Bosnia by the Turkish Secret Agent at Kostanitza.

(Translation.)

12 *Haziran*, 1293.

THE Austrian Generals have lately proceeded along the frontier from Tebriné to Boudova and Yaveniteha, and have allowed a body of 1,500 insurgents (Austrian subjects), assembled at Sergova to cross the Avna into Turkish territory. Another body of insurgents consisting of 2,000 men is being organized at Beligh for the purpose of making an attack on Otoka and Carabina. Independently of these, there is a great muster of insurgents at Sergova. These bands are amply provided with arms and provisions, and it is expected they will, within a fortnight, or perhaps sooner, proceed to attack Otoka.

Their plans receive every help and encouragement from the frontier Austrian military authorities, who direct their operations by means of written instructions, and who hold out to them, at the same time, promises of assistance in case of the Turkish forces being sent against them.

In resorting to these means, the object of the Austrian Generals is evidently to give sufficient provocation to the Turks to cross the Austrian frontier, and thus bring on a case for war between the two countries.

Meanwhile, the insurgents have attacked the Latin villages, forcing the inhabitants to cross into Austrian territory, in order, no doubt, that Austria may afterwards lay the blame on Turkey, and get the press to declare that she can no longer continue to receive in her dominions the Turkish Christian refugees.

Inclosure 3 in No. 322.

The Governor of Bosnia to His Majesty the Sultan.

(Traduction.)
(Télégraphique.) *Le* 21 Juin / 3 Juillet 1877.

LA Commission Mixte a prouvé que les Autrichiens, en envoyant des animaux sur toutes les parties de la frontière, et spécialement dans le District d'Azajik, ont causé plus de 20,000 piastres de dommages aux champs et à l'agriculture.

Par mon télégramme du 19 Juin / 1 Juillet, adressé à la Porte, je dis que les Commissaires Autrichiens avaient constaté que les Autrichiens doivent dédommager les pertes. Par une dépêche du Mutessarif de Béké nous apprenons que des sujets Autrichiens armés et ayant avec eux beaucoup de bétail ont passé à Vakif et ont détruit les champs et les prairies, et ont transporté le foin qu'ils ont fauché à l'autre côté de la rivière. Les mesures nécessaires ont été prises pour connaître les noms, prénoms, et résidence de ces individus. Dans la même lettre il a été signalé que cette circonstance pouvait entraîner des suites fâcheuses parmi les habitants de la frontière. J'ai, en conséquence, donné les ordres nécessaires pour qu'on surveille de près la frontière. Toutefois les Slaves, qui s'y trouvent depuis quelque temps, nous déclarent ouvertement la guerre; et le but de leurs incursions est d'exciter nos populations et de causer ainsi des meurtres et part et d'autre, et en nous accusant de tout cela susciter une nouvelle question entre les deux Etats.

Quoique le Consulat d'Autriche ait été prévenu de cet état des choses, nos avertissements sont restés sans résultat, nous avons donc informé le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères afin qu'on prenne les mesures nécessaires pour obvier immédiatement à cet état des choses.

No. 323.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 744. Secret.)
Therapia, July 9, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Sultan sent Said Pasha to me late yesterday afternoon with a message from him, to the effect that now that the Russians were advancing to the Balkans he wished to ask me as a friend, and not as Her Majesty's Ambassador, whether he could look forward to any help from England if his Empire were menaced with destruction, or whether he was to be abandoned altogether by her and the other Powers. If England were prepared to give him some assistance, and to save the Turkish Empire, the time had come for her to speak. It might soon be too late for her to do so.

I requested Said Pasha to tell the Sultan that I had no authority from Her Majesty's Government to give him any reason to believe that England would depart from the policy which she had hitherto pursued, and the nature of which had been clearly set before the Turkish Government, and that it would not be the part of a friend to hold out to him hopes which might hereafter be disappointed. I could, I said, give no other answer.

Said Pasha then said that His Majesty was very anxious to know whether there was any truth in the reports, which had appeared in the foreign newspapers, that England had come to an alliance, or an understanding, with Austria for the protection of the Turkish Empire. I replied that I had no ground for believing that these rumours were well founded.

The Sultan, Said Pasha said, was much distressed, and very anxious about the present state of affairs. His Majesty had not slept for two nights, having passed them in communicating with the Minister of War, the Commander-in-chief, and other military authorities in Roumelia, by a small telegraphic apparatus which he has had placed in his room. His Majesty was exceedingly displeased with the inactivity and apparent neglect of Abdul Kerim Pasha, and could not understand how the Russians had been permitted to cross the Danube at Sistova without opposition, and were now being allowed to march, unmolested, to the foot of the Balkans. His Majesty had given orders that they should be attacked at once, and if Abdul Kerim Pasha's forces were, in numbers and efficiency, such as he described them to be, the Russian advance ought to be checked, and their army be driven back upon the Danube. His Majesty had just ordered Reouf Pasha, the Minister of Marine, and an active and able General, to proceed immediately to the Balkans in order to superintend the defence of the passes.

Forty battalions were to be taken from the army in Montenegro, and to be hurried up to Adrianople and to those passes, where a large force was now being concentrated.

I reminded Said Pasha that I had ventured, on more than one occasion, to warn His Majesty of the inactivity of the Commander-in-chief in Bulgaria, and that Hobart Pasha had offered to destroy the boats and steamers which the Russians had been collecting for some time past opposite Sistova, and elsewhere, for the passage of the Danube, and to interrupt their lines of communication along the banks of the river. But he had been told by Abdul Kerim Pasha to mind his own affairs, had been obliged to return to Constantinople, where he had since remained inactive, and the Turkish gunboats, which might have been employed with good effect to prevent the Russians from crossing, had consequently not been turned to proper account.

Said Pasha said that the Sultan now began to see that he had been deceived, and to know who were his true friends. Unfortunately it was too late. He had been dragged into the war by evil counsellors, and those, who like himself (Said Pasha), had endeavoured to open his eyes to the truth were accused of being sold to Russia.

The Sultan had further directed Said Pasha to speak to me again about the outrages committed by the Russians upon the Mahomedan populations both in Asia and Europe, which seem to have made a very deep impression upon His Majesty. He wished me to know that the brutal manner in which the Russian troops had treated Mussulman women and girls, and had killed the old and weak in Armenia and Circassia, exceeded any of the acts attributed to the Bashi-Bazouks in Bulgaria last year, that when his troops entered Utch Kilissia after it had been abandoned by the Russians, they found in the church dead bodies of Christians and Mussulmans, who had been murdered, and that he had proof that Russian Agents were inciting the Bulgarian Christians to massacre the Mussulmans. His Majesty expressed a hope that I would not fail to communicate these facts to Her Majesty's Government, as he was most anxious that they might judge of the way in which the Russians were carrying on this war, and of its object, which was none other than the extermination of the Mussulman population of Turkey.

I begged Said Pasha to tell His Majesty that it was my duty to keep Her Majesty's Government fully informed of all that was taking place, and consequently to transmit to them any statements with reference to the proceedings of the Russian armies that were made to me by His Majesty. The Sultan has sent me several written communications on this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—I have the honour to inclose translation of telegrams received from Turkish Commander at Utch Kilisia on the subject of Russian barbarities.

A. H. L.

Inclosure in No. 323.

Telegrams received from Turkish Commander at Utch-Kilissé.

(Traduction.) *Le 27 Juin, 1877 (v.s.)*

NOUS partîmes hier de Gueruer et poursuivîmes l'ennemi, qui se replia à la hate; voyant l'impossibilité de l'atteindre avec les troupes déjà fatiguées, Hadji Hussein Pacha, accompagné de la cavalerie régulière et irrégulière, a été mis à leur poursuite. Ayant atteint l'ennemi à Utch-Kilissé, a ouvert le feu, qui dura environ trois heures et força l'ennemi à se retirer à Ipek-Guédik et la division survenant, a occupé le point de Utch-Kilissé. Après une halte le Général commandant expédia un détachement de l'armée Impériale à l'église pour y faire une reconnaissance. D'après les informations prises il a été malheureusement constaté qu'il y avait dans la dite église une dixaine de cadavres de Musulmans et Chrétiens tués environ dix jours auparavant et qu'il y avait parmi ceux là des individus attachés au service de l'église; qu'en outre certains objets appartenant au temple ont été découverts et les constructions environantes livrées aux flammes. Des plantons furent immédiatement placés autour de l'église et vers les huit heures et demie l'armée se mettant de nouveau en marche s'engagea avec l'ennemi à Ipek-Guédik vers les onze heures du soir; à cause de l'obscurité nous avons du cesser le feu d'artillerie et la fusillade qui dura jusqu'après le coucher du soleil.

Le lendemain l'ennemi recommença à l'aube le feu d'artillerie, et par la grâce de

Dieu, après avoir occupé les positions et les hauteurs nécessaires, nous ripostâmes. Le combat continua et l'ennemi se replia en bon ordre. Nous sommes en train de faire notre plan pour attaquer l'ennemi par notre aile gauche et nous espérons vous faire part de notre victoire et de notre conduite.

[23 Juin, 1293 (4 Juillet, 1877).—Arrivée de la dépêche au télégraphe de Deli Baba le 24 Juin, 1293.—ISMAIL HAKKI.]

D'après les nouvelles que nous avons ultérieurement reçues il a été constaté que les Russes ont blessé le curé de l'église et après l'avoir enchaîné, tout blessé qu'il était, l'ont emmené avec eux; je finis en ajoutant que le dit curé est réellement un des fidèles sujets de l'Empire.

[23 Juin, 1293.—Arrivée de la dépêche au télégraphe de Deli Baba le 24 Juin, 1293.—ISMAIL HAKKI.]

No. 324.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 745.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 9, 1877.*

Mr. STUART states in his confidential despatch to your Lordship No. 130 of the 23rd ultimo, that M. Tricoupi had denied the truth of a report mentioned by me that the Hellenic Consul-General at Constantinople had released prisoners from the Greek prison in order to send them to Greece to take part in an invasion of Turkey. I have directed further inquiries to be made on the subject, and I am assured that not only was the report in question well founded, but that the Hellenic Consul-General has been collecting from the Christian quarters of the city a number of other bad and desperate men to be forwarded to Greece with the same object.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 325.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 747.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 9, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 255 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose copy of a note which, in pursuance of your Lordship's instructions, I have addressed to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, calling his Excellency's attention to the statement of Her Majesty's Consul-General at Odessa as to the Russian vessels that had run the blockade of the Russian ports in the Black Sea.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 325.

Mr. Layard to Safvet Pasha.

Sir, *Therapia, July 9, 1877.*

ON the 9th of June I had the honour of addressing a note to your Excellency, in pursuance of instructions from Her Majesty's Government, as to the efficiency of the blockade of the Russian ports in the Black Sea by the Turkish squadron, which had been called in question. Your Excellency was good enough to inform me in your reply, dated the 21st of June, that the blockade was effective, and that no proof could be given of any vessel having run it. Her Majesty's Government have since been informed that the Russian steamer "Vladimir," formerly of the Russian Company, brought into Odessa on the 22nd ultimo a Turkish brig captured twenty miles from Varna; that another Russian vessel, the "Grand Duke Constantine," had sunk four small Turkish ships off the coast of Anatolia; that vessels belonging to the same

company run regularly between Odessa and Nicolaieff; and that the "Vesta" has brought two cargoes of corn from the latter port to Odessa.

I am directed by Her Majesty's Government to call the attention of the Porte to this statement as bearing on the question of the efficiency of the blockade of the Russian Black Sea ports.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 326.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 748.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 10, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of an interesting report, addressed to me by Sir Arnold Kemball, relating to the battle between the Turkish and Russian armies fought near Zewin on the 25th ultimo, in which the Turks achieved an important victory. Sir Arnold Kemball, in a private letter to me, bears high testimony to the ability and activity shown by Muktar Pasha on this occasion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 326.

Major-General Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Head-Quarter Camp, Zewin Dezi, June 29, 1877.*

HAVING left Erzeroum on Sunday, the 24th instant, with the intention of joining the Turkish Head-quarter Camp at Zewin, I found my way barred on the following day at Chorasan by the advance of the Russians, who had commenced their attack upon the Zewin position, and now occupied with their cavalry the road between the two places.

On Wednesday morning from Kiupri-Keui I advised your Excellency by telegraph that the Turks were holding their own on either wing, and, on arrival here on Thursday morning, I was able to add that they had succeeded in repelling the Russian attack on this position. Both telegrams are subjoined, though, owing to their transmission through the Turkish offices to be rendered into cypher by Mr. Zohrab, the terms of the original may prove to be altered. I have only done justice to Mukhtar Pasha in mentioning the energy with which he proceeded in person to call up reinforcements in order to make head against the Russian left after the defeat of Mohammed Pasha on Saturday, the 16th instant, as also the efforts he made to strengthen his position against the advance of the Russians from Kars. After the engagement of the 21st, of which the particulars have been communicated to your Excellency in the reports of Captains McCalmont and Trotter, General Derkokhasoff (?), threatened in rear by the movements of Faik Pasha from Wan, retired to his former position behind Tahir, and since the repulse of the Russians at this point he is reported to have withdrawn his force altogether from the line of Toprakkalaa, with the view of effecting a junction with the main body of the Russian army operating from Kars. From the description which I have received on the ground of the battle of the 25th instant (the affair of the 26th on the same spot being confined to a demonstration to cover their (the Russian) retirement), I have little doubt of the accuracy of the statement that, while the Turks, fighting behind their entrenchments in a position of great strength, lost less than 500 men killed and wounded, the loss of the assailants had not fallen short of 3,000. The Russians, it seems, impressed with the weakness of the Turks and confident of victory, had omitted every precaution to ascertain the nature of the ground on which they were posted, and, without making a reconnaissance, advanced at once, at midday after marching 10 miles from Mezinghert, to the attack of the right front of the Turkish entrenched camp behind Zewin. The point they chose was one of all others in which the Turks were unassailable. The bed of a mountain stream, now dry, divided their front from a precipitous ridge which overlooked the village of Zewin, and the wide valley of the Kau-su thence interposed between the hills and broken ground on which the Russians could alone find a suitable position for their guns, distant between 5,000 and 6,000 yards from the Turkish batteries. Over this interval the

Russian infantry had to clamber their way until within 800 yards they came upon the ravines and precipitous slopes exposed to the fire of the Turkish trenches. The advance would have been of extreme difficulty if the heights in front had been undefended; but when plied with the heavy, well-sustained fire of a line of breech-loaders, it is not surprising that the attacking columns from the contracted space over which they were operating should not have been able to take open order, and should have been shattered and decimated by cross fires from the flanks and front, as also here and there by grape, before they could reach the Turkish trenches. It is universally admitted that the Russian troops behaved with the greatest bravery, and returned again and again to the assault, which their leaders from the outset ought to have discovered was utterly hopeless. It was only at the close of the day that they made a faint attempt to turn the Turkish left by a ravine, where two battalions and two guns were sent forward to oppose them; but the day was already lost, the column was too weak to press the attack, and the Russians, at sunset defeated at all points, were compelled to retire. As above stated, their renewed attack on the following day (Tuesday, 26th), was a mere demonstration to cover their retreat to Milliduz.

The Russian force under fire was stated to consist of ten or twelve battalions and twenty-one guns, three battalions were held in immediate reserve, and the remainder with three guns were posted opposite to Khorasan to keep in check six Turkish battalions without guns, which were stationed at Tai Khojeh to observe the Delibaba Pass, and maintain the communications between the right and left wings of the Turkish army.

The whole merit of the successful defence of this position is due to Feizi Pasha (Kohlman), who, though ostensibly acting under Ismail Pasha, Wali of Erzeroum (called to the command here on the departure of Mukhtar Pasha for Delibaba), directed the operations of the day, and, as Chief of the Staff of Mukhtar Pasha, has had a principal share in the combinations of the campaign, and in the selection and fortification of the positions taken up on this side including, I understand, those of Kars and Batoum. I write in haste, and having travelled from Kiupri-Keui since Monday and without baggage, I beg your Excellency to excuse the style and informal character of this letter which I am compelled to write on thin paper.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. KEMBALL.

P.S.—As I write, intelligence is received that the Russian force has retired from Milliduz in the direction of Kars. It appears to have been commanded by General Loris Melikoff in person, with General Gayman, and some say General Devel, under his orders. Two superior officers are said to have been killed in the attack and to have been buried with military honours at Milliduz.

Mukhtar Pasha had returned here on 27th.

No. 327.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 749.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 10, 1877.*

THE Sultan sent Said Pasha to me this morning to inform me that the Russians had turned off from the road between Tirnova and the Shipka Pass, and were marching upon the pass which leads to Slimno, where, it is expected, they will attempt to cross the Balkans, and march upon Adrianople. His Majesty had ordered Raouf Pasha, who was at the latter place, to proceed at once to Slimno, and to make the necessary preparations for opposing the passage of the Russians over the mountains. He feared, however, that the reinforcements which had been ordered up, for the defence of the Balkans, and especially the 40 battalions detached from the army in Montenegro, would not reach Raouf Pasha in time. Should the Russians succeed in getting to Slimno, the road to Adrianople would be open to them, and the result would be disastrous.

Said Pasha read to me, by command of the Sultan, a telegram which had been received by the Porte from the Governor of Tarnova, who had left that place on the arrival of the Russians, and had succeeded in reaching Adrianople. He described the outrages committed by the Russians and the Bulgarian Christians upon the Mahomedans, who, according to him, were being treated with the utmost cruelty, tortured, and put to death, their villages being devastated and the whole of their property

destroyed. The Sultan had directed Said Pasha to inform me that these proceedings on the part of the Russians and Bulgarian Christians had caused him the greatest distress and indignation, because they convinced him that the Russians were deliberately seeking to massacre and exterminate the whole Mussulman population. If they were persisted in, His Majesty could not be responsible for the results. It would be impossible to restrain the Mahomedans any longer, and there might be a bloody retaliation upon the Christians.

I pointed out in the strongest terms to Said Pasha the importance of taking every possible measure to prevent the Mussulmans from revenging themselves indiscriminately upon the Christians. The reports of the proceedings of the Russians were, it was to be hoped, I said, exaggerated, and if a general slaughter of the Christians were to take place, a most terrible responsibility would fall upon the Turkish Government.

Said Pasha replied that the Sultan was most anxious to avoid the effusion of blood, and most especially that of innocent beings. He had given the strictest orders to the Turkish authorities to use all their influence with the Mahomedans to dissuade them from revenging upon their Christian fellow-subjects the deeds of the Russians. He would inform the Sultan of what I had said, and had no doubt that His Majesty would renew his orders to the authorities on this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 328.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 750. Secret.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 10, 1877.*

WHEN Said Pasha called upon me this morning to communicate to me, by command of the Sultan, the contents of a telegram which His Majesty had received from Adrianople (referred to in my despatch No. of this day), he spoke to me with reference to the possibility of peace being concluded with Russia. He hinted to me that suggestions had been made to the Sultan that if he chose to come to a secret and separate arrangement with Russia, she would consent to peace on three conditions: First, that Batoum and the surrounding territory should be surrendered to her; second, that the free passage of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles should be secured to her fleets; and thirdly, that Bulgaria should be formed into an autonomous province.

I endeavoured to ascertain from Said Pasha from whence these suggestions came, but he would not tell me more. I then asked him whether, in his opinion, the Sultan would be disposed to accept them. He replied that he thought not at the present moment, but he could not say that he would not be compelled to do so if the Russians succeeded in crossing the Balkans, which he feared might be the case if Abdul Kerim Pasha remained inactive at Shumla, and made no effort to check the Russian advance.

I further asked Said Pasha whether, from the communication that had reached the Sultan, it was absolutely positive that the terms he had mentioned would satisfy the Russians, and what was meant by "Bulgaria," whether it included Macedonia down to the Gulf of Salonica. He answered that he could give me no information on these points.

Said Pasha added that the Sultan wished to consult me before taking any step whatever in the direction of peace, and that he would keep me acquainted with all that passed, sending me any intelligence of importance that he might receive from the seat of war. His Majesty was anxious, he said, that I should keep Her Majesty's Government fully informed, and especially that I should impress upon them the urgent necessity of preventing the Russians from committing outrages upon the Musulmans which would infallibly lead to terrible acts of revenge.

I have every reason to suspect that the suggestion to the Sultan to make peace with Russia without consulting any other Power, and as to the terms which would be accepted by Russia, comes either directly or indirectly from the German Ambassador.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 329.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 751. Secret.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 10, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a Memorandum, which Admiral Hornby has been good enough to make for me, of a conversation which he had this morning with Prince Reuss, and which appears to me of sufficient importance to be communicated to your Lordship. It fully confirms the suspicions that I entertain of the course pursued here by the German Ambassador. His object is, I have every reason to think, to get the Porte to accept a peace highly favourable to Russia, and to induce it to believe that it cannot rely upon England, as she has designs of her own upon parts of Turkish territory. By this insinuation it is hoped that our influence will be destroyed, and that the Sultan will be led to come to terms with Russia without listening to or consulting England.

I cannot but feel a conviction, from information which has come to me from many sources, that Prince Reuss has been luring the Turks to their destruction by such means, and I cannot too seriously warn Her Majesty's Government against the policy at present apparently pursued by Germany in this country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 329.

Vice-Admiral Hornby to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Therapia, July* 10, 1877.

I CALLED on Prince Reuss this morning to pay my respects to him, when, to my surprise, he began to talk of current affairs. I could only conclude that he intended to say something which should reach your ears.

He hoped the war might not spread; that we, in England, were very suspicious of the Russians, though they had no desire beyond that of freeing their co-religionists; that the Emperor had been forced into the war by the excitement of his people, &c.

He then said we should fight only to protect our own interests. Would they be seriously injured by the freedom of the Straits?

I said that personally I did not think they would be so much injured directly, but we should be obliged to increase our squadron largely in the Mediterranean; but indirectly we should be seriously injured in India by the great loss to our prestige and the gain to that of Russia.

He said in England you always think Russia wants to attack you in India; she has no such wish. The arrangement proposed by Lord Granville for the retention of a neutral zone between the two was the natural one, and one they would like to see established.

He then recurred to the question of why we were so suspicious when the Emperor had given his word that he would not injure our interests.

I said he had given his word not to take Khiva, but he seemed to have been unable to control his statesmen or his Generals, and that the result had been that he had annexed almost the whole of the Khivan territory; and that, unless the statesmen of the two countries could come to some understanding, I thought our suspicions would continue, for it seemed that he was not absolutely autocratic.

He then said, why should statesmen not give one another guarantees which would be satisfactory? I asked what guarantee could they give that they would not occupy Constantinople? He said, you have advanced your squadron to Besika, why should you not bring it to Constantinople to protect the town? I said the squadron alone could not prevent the advance of a large army on to the town.

He answered, then why not advance some other force, and take such a guarantee as is satisfactory to you? I believe if it was firmly, but courteously, proposed, without saying we doubted the word of the Emperor, no objection would be felt; but, he said, if it was done abruptly, or announced with harsh words, it might very likely lead to war.

The fact is, he wound up, the Russians have got on their hands a much tougher affair than they expected. It is true the Turkish army cannot do much in the field,

but it can defend positions well, and after the Russians have obtained some decided success in Bulgaria, they will be very glad to make up a peace.

You are more likely to be able to fathom his meaning than I am.

Yours, &c.

(Signed) G. PHIPPS HORNBY.

No. 330.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 754.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 10, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch addressed to me by Consul Zohrab, with reference to the excesses committed by the Kurds in the Pashalic of Van.

The apprehensions of Mr. Zohrab may be somewhat exaggerated, but from communications made to me by Safvet Pasha, and transmitted to your Lordship, it is to be feared that these barbarous tribes have devastated the country to a terrible extent, and have been guilty of great outrages upon the inhabitants, Mahommedans and Christians. The Persian Minister informs me that Sheikh Djelaleddin, the Kurdish Chief mentioned in Pasha Khan's letter, is a notorious robber and evil-doer, who is in the habit of transferring his allegiance backwards and forwards from Turkey to Persia, and extending his marauding expeditions to both.

Taking advantage of the war provoked by Russia, he appears to be plundering and murdering right and left. I have so frequently referred to the terrible results to the Christians themselves of the war declared by Russia against Turkey that I need not again touch upon this subject.

Your Lordship will perceive from Mr. Abbott's despatches to Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran, copies of which go to your Lordship by this messenger, that the greater number of Kurds who are committing excesses in the Van Pashalic are from Persian tribes who have crossed the frontier into Turkey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 330.

Consul Zohrab to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Erzeroom, June* 30, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose some extracts from a letter I have just received from Van from the Rev. Mr. Scott, giving a sketch of the state of the country.

In a letter from one of the missionary ladies at Van of the same date, which I have been permitted to read, details are entered into which give a most painful picture of the condition of the peasants in that province. The writer truly remarks that were the cruelties perpetrated by the Koords known in Europe, the Bulgarian atrocities would be thrown into the shade.

The Governor-General of Van, Hassan Pasha, is obliged to secure his own safety by keeping secret and changing constantly the place he sleeps in, generally selecting the place of some poor remote Christian.

Twelve guns, which were sent for the defence of Van against a Russian attack, have been placed in position in the citadel and pointed so as to enfilade the streets, and the Koords have been told that if they attempt a general pillage of the town or massacre of the people, they will be opened on them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. ZOHRAB.

No. 331.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 755.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 10, 1877.

THE statements as to the cruelties and outrages committed by the Russians upon the Mahommedan population of the Turkish territories which they have invaded, and

overrun, in Asia and Europe, deserve very serious consideration. Many of them may be, and no doubt are, exaggerated; but I fear that there is too much reason to believe that some of them, at least, are well founded. Sir Arnold Kemball, in one of his despatches, mentions how the women in some of the Mussulman villages near Kars were stripped naked, flogged, and driven into the Turkish lines on the plea that they had given information to the besieged. The accounts of the shocking treatment by the Russian authorities and troops of the inhabitants of many villages in Circassia, on the approach of the Turkish forces, come from so many independent sources, that their general truth can scarcely be called in question. Their appears to be some grounds for believing that Russian agents are inciting the Bulgarian Christians to massacre the Mahommedans. Other proceedings of a similar nature on the part of the Russians have been brought by the Porte to the notice of the European Powers in circulars addressed to its Representatives abroad.

The Sultan and his Ministers have, on several occasions, spoken to me on this subject, and have expressed their fears that, when the cruel treatment of the Mussulman populations by the Russians comes to be publicly known, it may be very difficult to restrain the feelings of indignation and revenge which it will cause amongst the Mahommedans of Turkey. To do the Porte justice, it has not hitherto made use of these charges against the Russians to excite public opinion against them. The time may come, however, when the Turkish Government may think it necessary, in self-defence, to do so. When the Sultan and his Ministers have denounced to me the cruelties attributed to the Russians, and have expressed to me their conviction that it is part of the policy of Russia to exterminate, as far as possible, the Mahommedan population of the countries which they occupy, I have urged them, in the strongest language, not to make use of these accusations to incite the Mussulmans against the Christians, and to turn the war into one of fanaticism, and into a life-and-death struggle for religion, as well as for hearth and home. They have invariably replied that they have no wish to give it that character, and that it was the Emperor who proclaimed to his people that the war was waged by him against the infidels for the triumph of the Orthodox faith. They observe, with some indignation, that they cannot understand how it is that whilst Europe applauds Russia for invoking the religious fanaticism of her people to destroy Turkey, and to promote her ambitious policy, Turkey is denounced as barbarous and fanatic for appealing to the religious sentiments of her people in order to defend herself.

A person connected with the secret police, and who has, on many occasions, given good information to Her Majesty's Embassy, told me yesterday that the religious feelings of the Mussulmans of Constantinople, and of the Provinces, was beginning to be excited against the Christians by the rumours that were spreading of the cruel manner in which the Russians were treating the Mahommedan population, and that he felt great alarm for the safety of the Christians. He tried to impress upon me the urgent necessity for the presence of the British fleet in the Bosphorus for their protection. He assured me that there were Russian secret agents in Constantinople endeavouring to incite the Christians and Mahommedans to commit outrages upon each other, and it was his conviction, he said, that if, in consequence of some quarrel, Mahommedan blood was shed, the result might be a general panic and a massacre. He said that he had denounced many of these agents to the Porte, and that it had been about to expel five of the worst from the country, but they were claimed by the German Embassy, as being under its protection, and were still in Constantinople. I am not willing to share altogether in my informant's alarms, although they are to a certain extent, no doubt, well founded. However, according to the reports of Her Majesty's Consular Agents in Roumelia and elsewhere, which have been transmitted to your Lordship, the relations between the Mahommedans and Christians are, at this moment, of a friendly character; and unless the advance and proceedings of the Russians should cause a change in them, there is no reason to apprehend any danger to the latter. In Constantinople everything is outwardly quiet.

Your Lordship will have learnt by some of my despatches, and by Consular reports, how much exaggeration prevails as to outrages upon Christians in the Turkish Provinces. Highly coloured stories upon this subject are no doubt designedly circulated, and are sent home by certain newspaper correspondents for sensational purposes. The accounts which first reached me of "atrocities" committed upon Christian men and women in the Dobrudcha by the Turkish authorities and troops, bearing a striking resemblance to those at first in circulation last year with regard to Bulgaria, appeared to me so well authenticated that I was almost induced to transmit them to your Lordship as trustworthy. Before doing so, however, I sent Colonel Sankey, the

British Vice-Consul at Kustendji, and subsequently Mr. Reade, Her Majesty's Consul at Rustchuk, to the district to ascertain their truth from personal investigation. Your Lordship will have learnt by their reports that the accounts were grossly exaggerated, if not altogether unfounded. I saw a letter addressed to a highly respectable American gentleman here by a person who might be supposed to be well informed, giving the most minute details of shocking outrages committed upon Christian women and children, which have since proved to be utterly untrue. The writer says that a "good 'Daily News' correspondent" should be sent to the spot to enlighten the British public on the subject. This will give an idea of the way in which "atrocities" are got up to satisfy a demand for them in England. The truth is, I believe, this. The Turkish Government has been compelled to withdraw its troops and police from the provinces to strengthen its forces in the field. Consequently, it has scarcely any means at its disposal to afford efficient protection to the peaceable population, Mussulman as well as Christain. At the same time the Circassians, Tartars, Kurds, and other wild tribes, who are, at all times, with great difficulty kept under control, have taken advantage of this state of things to plunder and rob. Their excesses have, on some occasions, led to bloodshed, and Christians have frequently been the victims. Such occurrences have been exaggerated into massacres of the Christians by the Mahommedans, and have been eagerly accepted as such. When the Christians have had the courage, as is unfortunately rarely the case, to unite in defending themselves against these marauders, as did the German colonists in the Dobrudcha, they have generally been beaten off. Their object has been plunder, chiefly of horses and cattle, and not murder, nor have they been impelled by religious fanaticism. The Turkish population has taken no part in these raids and robberies. On the contrary, I am informed by Mr. Blunt, and other trustworthy authorities, that in some of the mixed villages of Rumelia, Mussulmans and Christians have entered into a kind of league for mutual protection. It is a pity that such should not be more generally the case, and I have urged the Porte to encourage the formation of mixed police, or militia, as at Salonica, and elsewhere, for the general protection of life and property during the present state of affairs. There is no doubt that the greater part of Turkey is in lamentable anarchy and disorder, and that there is but little security for life and property. But this is one of the results of this unhappy war, which will bring death, suffering, and misery upon innumerable human beings, Christians and Mahommedans. It is to be earnestly hoped that the desolation and carnage may not be increased by Turkey following the example of Russia, and making the war one of race and creed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 332.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 750.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 10, 1877.*

I WAS informed five days ago by M. Christich that, in pursuance of instructions from the Servian Government, he had given the most distinct assurances to the Turkish Government that the attitude of Servia had in no way been changed by the visit of Prince Milan to the Emperor of Russia, and that Servia had no intention to take part in the war between Russia and Turkey under present circumstances. M. Christich added that Safvet Pasha had expressed himself satisfied with these assurances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 333.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 757.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 11, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Reade, reporting state of affairs in the Dobrudja.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 333.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Varna, July 6, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that on my return to this from Constantinople on the morning of the 4th instant, finding the Danube Commission small steamboat about to leave for Kustendji, I obtained a passage by her, and on my arrival I at once saw Vice-Consul Sankey and Captain Drummond, of Her Majesty's ship "Rapid," who assured me that all the stories we had heard respecting massacres in the Dobrudja were either untrue or greatly exaggerated, and that perfect tranquillity reigned in Kustendji and its vicinity.

It appears that all the Dobrudja above the Danube and Black Sea Railway has been evacuated, and that a considerable amount of pillage has taken place, but no murders have been committed; one or two Christians, however, were slightly wounded, one of whom died from gangrene caused by neglect.

Having heard that Fahir Bey, the Mutasserif of Toultcha, and General Ali Riza Pasha were close to Medjidie, by the kindness of Mr. Harriss, Director-in-chief of the Danube and Black Sea Railway, who placed a special train at my disposal, I proceeded there, and obtained from the Governor and General a confirmation of what had been told to me by Vice-Consul Sankey and Captain Drummond.

I had a long conversation with these officers, and strongly urged on them how damaging to Turkey these Bashi-Bazouk and Circassian outrages were.

They appeared fully convinced of this, and assured me that they had done, and would still do, all in their power to prevent their occurrence; they added that under the present state of things it was extremely difficult, indeed almost impossible, to prevent the pillaging of villages that had been abandoned, but that no case of massacre had occurred, and this was certainly corroborated by the people I saw in Kustendji.

I told them that I had come to their district by instruction from your Excellency, and they both begged me to assure you that they would do all in their power to prevent any disorder whatever, notwithstanding the difficulties in their way.

I asked the General what he knew as to Russians in the Dobrudja; he replied, that no considerable force had crossed, but that small parties had been seen near the Danube in the direction of Hirsova, and that none had made their appearance near the line of railway, the position occupied by the Turkish forces of the Dobrudja, which at this moment amount to about twelve battalions of infantry and two battalions of artillery.

The General and Fahir Bey promised that in the event of the advance of any Russians they would give timely warning to all at Kustendjie, and the other places in the district, and would do what they could to assist them in gaining what places of safety they desired to go to.

On our way from Kustendjie to Medjidie we passed eight or ten villages all entirely abandoned, and it was melancholy to see the crops all ripe for harvest but apparently quite abandoned. Fahir Bey, however, told me that he hoped to persuade many to reap their crops, and that they would be protected as far as possible.

Having assured myself that all was as satisfactory as could be desired, and even more so under actual circumstances, I returned to Kustendjie, and, after again conferring with Captain Drummond and Vice-Consul Sankey, I left for Varna, where I arrived this morning.

I have now heard that disorders have occurred at Rustchuk and its vicinity, in which Christians have suffered. I shall consequently proceed to Rustchuk to-morrow morning, and, if necessary, will endeavour to see the Vali and also the General on the subject.

As regards the hostilities near Sistova, I have heard so many conflicting accounts that I fear to mislead your Excellency, but when at Rustchuk I will endeavour to obtain the real state of affairs. I am persuaded, however, that better information is to be obtained at Constantinople than we have here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

No. 334.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 758.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 11, 1877.*

IN pursuance of the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram of the 9th instant, I have informed the Porte that Mr. Kirby Green is gone to Cettigné.

Safvet Pasha received the information with satisfaction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 335.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 760.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 11, 1877.*

MR. ABBOTT, in his Confidential despatch to your Lordship No. 9 of the 20th ultimo, transmits information that apprehensions are entertained by the Nestorian Christians in consequence of the threatening attitude towards them of the Kurds, and that another massacre of those unfortunate and interesting Christians, similar to that perpetrated some thirty years ago by Bedir Khan Bey, a notorious Kurdish Chief, may be impending. I am taking steps to call the urgent attention of the Porte to the statements contained in the letters inclosed in Mr. Abbott's despatch, which has only just passed through my hands, and of which I have retained a copy, and I will consider whether I can do anything more for the protection of the Nestorians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 336.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 43. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, July 6, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a translation of a despatch which has been addressed to me by the British Consular Agent in Rethymo. Mr. Trifilli describes the excited feelings of the Christian population of that district, which are mainly attributable to the misgovernment which has given that part of the island a bad preeminence. All that he states of that misgovernment is substantially true, and is confirmed by impartial and competent observers on the spot.

Ever since my arrival in Crete, nearly seven years ago, the Courts of Law in Rethymo have had an evil notoriety for their cynical disregard of justice, and not only have the local Governors been unable to cope with the growing evil, but every successive Governor-General has been foiled in his attempts to establish a purer judicial practice. The source of the evil is apparent to everyone, being caused by the presence in Rethymo of a secret Mussulman organization called "Bektash," a society which elsewhere professes liberal opinions in matters of religion, but which, in Rethymo at least, is influenced by a most narrow exclusiveness, their main object apparently being, as M. Trifilli points out, the ruin of the Christian element of the population. Most of the Mahomedan citizens of Rethymo are enrolled in this association, such Government employés as do not belong to it being completely under its influence. Its injurious action was pointed out by Mr. Acting Consul Hillebrandt in his despatch to Earl Granville, dated October 4, 1873, and which has appeared in a recent Blue Book, and who remarks of this and other Mussulman organizations in Crete: "The object of these associations can have no other meaning than to paralyse through their influence the regular course of impartial administration." In this they have completely succeeded in Rethymo, and when, on a late occasion, the Consular Agent complained to the Mutessarif Pasha of the evil pass to which matters had come, he replied in these words, "Yes, you are quite right; I am ashamed to see what takes place here. I know all the injustice that is committed, and, if a remedy cannot be soon found, I shall give in my resignation."

The state of things in Rethymo explains to a great extent why there is greater

impatience in that part of the country to begin an insurrection than perhaps anywhere else. The evils complained of there, however, are more or less felt all over the island, and certainly are apparent enough here. The last insurrection had left a legacy of hatred to both the contending parties. The peasantry, both Mussulman and Christian, had had their homesteads burnt, and the latter had suffered the additional pain of seeing their wives and children perish from cold and want. The Mahomedan Beys of the maritime towns, and particularly of Canea, had witnessed the destruction of their flourishing farms, and were reduced to temporary ruin. When order was re-established, the latter, instead of allowing old sores to heal, indulged their feelings of spite by oppressing and denying justice to the Christians. The Tribunals were entirely in their hands, owing to their being nearly everywhere presided over by Mussulmans. An ignoble clique had established itself here in the capital, which practically had the appointment of most of the inferior functionaries throughout the island, who thus became their tools. Against an all-pervading system of this kind, the Christians were powerless to contend, and even such an able and upright Governor as Réouf Pasha succumbed to its baleful influence. The Organic Law, which it was hoped would guarantee equal rights to both communities, entirely failed to do so, and it is generally acknowledged that injustice and partiality have been more rife since its promulgation than before. The Christians believe that there is no hope of improving their lot but by having recourse to arms. They are deaf to counsels of moderation, and it is only in deference to the urgent advice of their countrymen in Greece who have submitted to the authority of the present Greek Ministry, that the Cretans are not now in open rebellion. The Chiefs generally are chafing at the delay, and the passions on either side are so inflamed, that great cruelties, it is to be feared, will be committed when open warfare is once begun.

It is to be wished that a more able and resolute Governor than Samih Pasha were at the head of affairs at present. He would make a mild and popular Governor in peaceful times, but I can hardly be mistaken in supposing that he will lack the energy requisite sternly to repress acts of insubordination or license.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Inclosure in No. 336.

Mr. Trifilli to Consul Sandwith.

(Translation.)

Sir, *Rethymo, June* 30, 1877.

THE invitation of the Sublime Porte made to the Cretan population to name a Commission of ten Delegates, five Christian and five Mussulman, to proceed to Constantinople to discuss their demands has been rejected by the Christian inhabitants of this district. These say they do not want to take cognizance of such invitations, but, on the contrary, they remain firm in their demands, adding that sooner or later they will have again to fight to obtain their rights. They say, besides, that inasmuch as the laws have been trampled upon, inasmuch as justice does not exist, inasmuch as a Christian can never have his rights before any Tribunal whenever he has a suit with a Mussulman, inasmuch as a Mussulman Committee formed in the city takes the management of the Government, having for its basis the destruction of the Christian element, nothing remains for them but to take up arms, and with them to demand their rights or to die in the attempt, death being preferable to their present existence. It must be confessed, indeed, that justice does not exist here, instead of which there exists arbitrary rule, partiality, &c., consequences of the ignorance and fanaticism of the Mussulman functionaries. It is impossible to obtain justice in any affair whatever. The Organic Law of Crete is a dead letter. Tribunals only exist in appearance. The judges are for the most part unable to read and write, and without merit. The President of the Commercial Tribunal, Mustafa Effendi, can neither read nor write, and before filling his post he was a Custom-house guard; yet with all this, and though it is contrary to the spirit of the existing law, the Government keeps him in his post. The Government proclaims justice, equality, and security for the individual; but these are only words, only dust thrown in the eyes of those who do not know better.

The above-mentioned inhabitants of this district continue to gather in their crops while employing themselves at the same time in preparations for war. A considerable meeting, it is said, will be held these days in Apocorona, where various questions will be discussed, and, amongst others, the question whether they ought to commence the revolution now or await the entry of the Russian troops into Bulgaria. It is difficult to know what the result will be, but all depends on the attitude of Greece, from whence the Cretans await the first sign for taking up arms. It would appear, however, that for the moment Greece recommends the Cretan Christian population to remain quiet, and if the revolution has not until now broken out it is owing to the prudence of the Hellenic Government, prudence which it is to be hoped it will continue to maintain, since if a revolution does burst out God knows what will be the consequences.

So much have I considered it necessary to bring to your knowledge, and I have, &c.

(Signed) T. A. TRIFILLI.

No. 337.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 46. Political.)

My Lord, *Salonica, July* 7, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith inclosed, for your Lordship's information, a copy of my despatch of this day's date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, sending the report of the First Dragoman of this Consulate on the robberies and murders, with my suggestions as to the remedy for the evil which is becoming very serious.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 337.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Salonica, July* 7, 1877.

IT is my painful duty to have to record a fearfully disorganized state of things in my Consular district, and, as this state appears to be on the increase, I think measures ought to be taken to check it. Her Majesty's Government has ordered all Consuls "to be very careful to report all cases of outrage or disturbance committed;" but so many come in from every quarter that my time would be entirely taken up with these cases to the exclusion of all other business. Scarcely have I applied to the authorities to investigate and punish a crime before two or three more of a worse nature crop up, and the first is neglected and forgotten.

Inclosed I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency a translation into French of the report of M. Bizzo, First Dragoman of this Consulate, translated from the Greek under his own supervision, and signed by him; and, so far from being a partial and exaggerated statement, I am informed by M. Malet, my French colleague, that the reports he receives are more numerous and more horrible still.

As I had the honour to say in one of my previous despatches to your Excellency that the dreadful war between Russia and Turkey takes away from the provinces all the able-bodied respectable men, and leaves the idle reprobates, who desert and join the gangs of brigands:—this plea is brought forward by the local authorities as an excuse for want of action in repressing disorders; but if it be admitted, Turkey will soon fall again into the state of anarchy before Sultan Mahmoud's reign, and the Porte will lose even the semblance of authority it now possesses in the provinces.

I will prove this plea is based on a fallacy. My experience and the inclosed report show that the evil lies in the impunity possessed by the criminals through the complicity of the officers of the Porte themselves. There is no doubt whatever of this fact. The reports I receive from the Vice-Consuls all agree on this point, and here is one of the many cases.

A gang of brigands made a descent on the farm "Prodromos," in the neighbourhood of Verria, and carried away a lad, son of one of the well-to-do tenants, demanding 450*l.* Turkish as ransom. The "Yuzbashee" (captain of the soldiers), instead of pursuing the robbers, accused the father of being in collusion with the gang, pretending that the disappearance of the son was a sufficient evidence against the father. The poor man, knowing the futility of attempting to disprove an accusation brought by

a superior officer, consented to pay 50*l.* Turkish to be let off from going to prison, which sum, together with the ransom money (if even largely abated), will reduce this family to a state of indigence from one of hard-earned competency, and very likely lead to ultimate beggary on one or two bad harvests, for the money must be borrowed at a high rate of interest. But cases of this sort are the rule and not the exception, as Mr. Suter, of Thessaly, and Mr. Pecchioli, of Cavalla's, reports testify.

Now, Sir, if I may be allowed humbly to suggest to your Excellency's superior judgment, I would say that the Government of the Porte must absolutely insist on every man in office in Turkey being held responsible, and no excuse of any kind allowed from the highest, the Vali, down to the Sheikh or Elder of a village or of a quarter in the towns. A system of moral force would then be established when the chiefs found out they could not escape punishment for neglect of duty, and no military force would be required. This was the system adopted by the Egyptian Government in Syria, which worked admirably without any police force whatever. The present state of the country really demands this before it becomes worse. Pressure must be put upon the Valis in order that they may do the same on the Beys and members of the Mejlisses, who are always more or less connected with the brigands.

There is at this moment no safety for life or property within half an hour of this city.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

P.S.—While I am writing I receive a report from Mr. Vice-Consul Suter, dated 30th June last, of the pillage by brigands of the monastery of Vitoma, about five hours distant from Tricala, and one and a half from Megarki; and of the torturing of the monks and an aged nun, which, he says, is "too horrible to describe." Should your Excellency require it, I will send the whole report.

E. B. B. B.

Inclosure 2 in No. 337.

M. Bizzo to Acting Consul Barker.

M. le Consul, *Salonique, le 5 Juillet*, 1877.

FAISANT suite à mon dernier rapport, j'ai l'honneur de vous exposer ce qui suit:—

Les pays environnants la Province de Salonique sont infestés de brigands dont la plus grande partie sont des déserteurs de l'armée Ottomane, Rédifs et Mustahfiz.

Dans la commune de Verria et de Catterina il y a dix bandes de brigands; les deux sont composées de Chrétiens—l'une de Carapataky et l'autre de Caloyero, chefs de bande—et les huit autres sont exclusivement de Musulmans.

Les bandes de brigands Musulmans se réfugient dans les fermes des Turcs. Les gardiens et les facteurs (stewards) des dites fermes sont pour la plupart des Albanais, qui sont concitoyens et parents des brigands.

Plusieurs Beys, propriétaires et influents, se servent des brigands pour leurs vengeances personnelles, et c'est ainsi qu'à chaque jour nous entendons de vols, de meurtres, de viols, assassinats, et autres incalculables méfaits. Il est regrettable de voir que les autorités ne se soucient pas de toutes ces choses, mais probablement c'est à cause que les victimes sont toujours des Chrétiens.

Les soldats et les gendarmes du Gouvernement se promènent dans les villages Chrétiens, faisant toutes sortes d'exactions, et accusent les plus riches parmi les Chrétiens d'être les complices et les receleurs des brigands. Les autorités s'empressent seulement d'arrêter les innocents, parcequ'elles croient prostituer la Loi Sacrée en arrêtant les véritables coupables, qui sont presque toujours Musulmans. La même chose arrive dans les procès civils: la justice est accordée à qui la paie la plus chère.

Les faits suivants m'ont été communiqués par le Drogman du Consulat de Monastir:—

1. Le mois passé un certain Bombe, Musulman de Perlopé, a exigé que les Chrétiens du village lui transportent gratuitement du bois pour la construction de sa

maison; l'un des chefs du village s'est refusé de se soumettre à cette angarie (forced labour) et alors le Turc est entré de force dans la maison du chef et a tué deux femmes qui se trouvaient là; et cependant les autorités n'ont pas pris aucune mesure répressive.

2. Dans le village Serbetzi une bande de 130 brigands Musulmans a égorgé huit Chrétiens et enlevé en esclavage huit autres, sur le sort desquels il n'y a aucune nouvelle.

3. Entre Giortza et Pissordir quatre-vingt brigands ont arrêté et dévalisé une caravane de quarante passagers; l'argent volé s'élève à la somme de 2,000 livres Turques. Deux parmi les passagers ayant voulu opposer de la résistance ont été immédiatement tués. Les dits brigands ont aussi coupé en pièces le nommé Lambro Demertze, négociant.

4. A Ochrida il se tient annuellement une foire au Monastère de Saint-Naum. Là aussi quatre-vingt brigands Musulmans entrèrent de force, et après avoir tué dix Chrétiens, ils ont tout dévalisé et pillé, et sont partis.

5. Le négociant Liateo a été massacré en route, étant parti en dernier lieu du village de Coussovo.

6. Demi-heure loin de Monastir deux meuniers ont été tués dans leur moulin, et leurs têtes ont été fracassées entre les meules de pierre du dit moulin.

7. Un autre méfait a été accompli à trois heures distant de Monastir, où le nommé Yassioula a été brûlé avec du pétrole.

8. Une autre femme a aussi été brûlée avec du pétrole.

Le brigandage est patronné par la plus grande partie des Juges Musulmans. J'ai observé, et je me suis informé avec la plus grande certitude, que lorsqu'une nouvelle relative à quelque acte de brigandage arrive, les personnes qui se trouvent être des employés (officials) s'empressent seulement de s'informer si les victimes sont des Chrétiens ou des Musulmans, et dans le premier cas elles ne se soucient pas de prendre aucune mesure répressive.

Les Chrétiens sont dans la plus grande misère et désespérés. Non-seulement leur vie, leur honneur, et leur fortune sont à chaque instant menacés, mais les exactions en argent qui se font continuellement de la part des brigands surpassent d'assez les taxes qui sont prélevées directement et indirectement par le Gouvernement.

Les Circassiens aussi continuent leur métier d'assassins et maraudeurs.

Plusieurs villageois m'ont rapporté qu'ils sont menacés de mort s'ils refusent d'obéir aux brigands, et surtout s'ils s'opposent à leurs continuelles exactions.

Dans le village de Paliochori, près de la ferme du Capitaine Synge, les brigands sont entrés de nuit dans la maison du Chrétien Colovopulo, et après l'avoir lié ils ont violé les femmes qui se trouvaient dans la maison, et ensuite ils ont pillé la même maison, menaçant de mort quiconque voudrait se risquer de les dénoncer.

Dans le village de Stavro, aussi près de la ferme du Capitaine Synge, on a tué le père et le fils, deux Chrétiens.

A Skilizzo, aussi tout près de la même ferme, un enfant a été enlevé et conduit en esclavage.

A Neocastro a été tué le fils de Georges.

Dans le village de Prodromos, le fils du Chef du village, nommé Anastase, a été enlevé en esclavage, et après beaucoup de prières les brigands ont consenti à restituer l'enfant moyennant la somme de 450 livres Turques, autrement ils auraient coupé la tête de l'enfant. Le pauvre père a été contraint de vendre toute sa fortune pour 300 livres Turques, et d'emprunter encore le restant pour pouvoir sauver son fils. Les brigands en question sont protégés par des Beys.

Le Valaque George Pontefuenta a été tué. Les brigands l'ont tué par ordre de Zeir Bey et Yahia Bey.

Le fils de Zeir Bey est le Secrétaire du Vilayet de Salonique. Il s'appelle Ismaïl Bey. Sa mauvaise conduite a été souvent rapporté aux divers Gouverneurs, mais inutilement. Parmi ses qualités, il est aussi faussaire.

Les brigands viennent d'enlever le fils du Valaque Coclio Théghe, pour la tête duquel ils demandent 450 livres Turques; mais la fortune de la famille ne s'élève qu'à peine une quarantaine de livres.

Une autre bande de brigands, d'accord avec les gendarmes, ont enlevé le négociant de Siatrista nommé Nako, à qui on demande une somme de 700 livres Turques pour sa libération sous peine d'être décapité. Six autres individus ont été dévalisés près de Verria.

D'autres brigands ont enlevé le neveu de Pulio Yala Caterinli, et sa tête a été

mise au prix de 1,200 livres Turques. Le délai accordé à la famille a été de sept jours.

Veuillez, &c.
Le 1er Drogman du Consulat de Sa Majesté à Salonique,
(Signé) JEAN BIZZO.

No. 338.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to Lord Tenterden.—(Received July 18.)

(Private.)
Dear Lord Tenterden, *Simnitza, on the Danube, July 11, 1877.*

THE Russians when they occupied Bjela a few days ago behaved worse than the Turks who had just left the town, and who, indeed, had left it in every way intact.

The Russians on the night of their arrival, plundered and looted right and left, but did not, however, violate women or commit any excesses of that description.

I mention this in a private letter to you, as it would be very awkward if in the House of Commons it were to be said that the Government has official information on the subject.

You probably know also that the Bulgarians behaved in much the same manner in Sistova, a town which the Turks had also respected.

As far as fighing is concerned I am afraid I shall see nothing except mutilated bodies, &c., the sight of which, if opportunity arises, will not be spared me by the Emperor.

I was very glad to see by Lord Derby's speech in the House of Lords that he approved my conduct during my recent troubles at Ploeshti.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) FRED. WELLESLEY.

The Russians have been fearfully slow, and if they had had to deal with others than Turks, their crossing at Sistova would have proved a disaster, as they were five days building their bridge after they had effected a landing, giving ample time to the Turks to surround the landed troops.

F. W.

No. 339.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, July 17, 1877.*

TWO Pashas, 6,000 troops, with large number of guns leaving Nicopoli, have been taken prisoners by General Krudener's force.

No. 340.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

Galatz, July 17, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

COMMISSIONER of Danube—

"It is confirmed that the Russians have sunk four vessels containing about 260 cubic yards in the Sulina branch, about one mile and a-half below the upper entrance. On the top of the vessels they have thrown about 500 cubic yards additional stones reducing depth to about four feet."

No. 341.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 279.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 17, 1877.*

AUSTRIAN Ambassador received following information from his second Dragoman sent to Adrianople, dated :—

"At Yeni-Zaagra there was no fighting, but the Russians retired after making reconnaissance; but at Slivno and Kazanlik there was fighting going on yesterday, with what result is unknown. Russians have not appeared at Shipka, but at Yamboli they repulsed a body of Circassians, who were, it is stated, attempting to burn a town."

No. 342.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(Telegraphic:)
(Most Confidential.) *Vienna, July 17, 1877, midnight.*

MINISTER of War, whom I have just seen, attaches no importance to passage of the Balkan by the Russian forces reported yesterday. He says that it cannot be supported and must fall back, and he believes that a serious advance across the mountains will not be attempted until Rustchuk is taken, which is not likely to happen for two months to come, or before the autumn will have made the passage of an army extremely difficult if not impossible.

No. 343.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, July 18, 1877.*

TWO divisions expected to-day at Tiflis to reinforce Russian army in Asia. Further reinforcement ordered. Two corps d'armée are ordered to reinforce Russian army on Danube.

No. 344.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Cattaro, July 18, 1877.*

I AM returning to Scutari. Although Prince of Montenegro is evidently aware that he cannot undertake offensive operations of the slenderest importance, he feels bound to follow the advice of the Russian Agent, who favours an active state of war. I have written by post.

No. 345.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 248.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 18, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 585 of the 11th instant, I transmit copy of a despatch from Colonel Stokes,* from which you will see that, though he considers that the effect of the sinking by the Russians of barges filled with stones in the Sulina branch of the Danube will be disastrous to the navigation of the river and to the works of the Commission, he does not concur in your view as to the neutrality of the waters of the branch.

Her Majesty's Consul at Galatz has been instructed by telegraph to inform the

* No. 270.

British Commissioner that, if his colleagues decide to protest against the act, he is authorized to join them in the protest.

I transmit also copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh,* inclosing copy of a note which he addressed on the 11th instant to the Russian Government, begging that instructions to prevent the destruction of the channel might be given without delay.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 346.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 249.)
Foreign Office, July 18, 1877.

Sir,

I APPROVE your having instructed Captain Cooper, as stated in your despatch No. 590 of the 12th instant, to make inquiries on his way to Bosna Seraï, into the truth of the reports that Turkish insurgents have been allowed to assemble on Austrian territory, and as to the reason why the insurgents have been able to collect without molestation in the north-west of Bosnia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 347.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 330.)
Foreign Office, July 18, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 719 of the 3rd instant, inclosing copy of the instructions which you have addressed to Mr. Vice-Consul Brophy, directing him to report respecting the outrages and excesses which may occur in his Vice-Consular district, and I have to state to you that those instructions are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 348.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 331.)
Foreign Office, July 18, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatches Nos. 699 of the 30th June and 712 of 3rd July, relating to the excesses alleged to have been committed upon Christians in the Dobrudscha by Circassians and other marauders, and reporting the steps which you had taken with a view to obtain accurate information on the subject, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve your proceedings in this matter, as well as the language which you held to the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha, as reported in your despatch No. 699.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 349.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 333.)
Foreign Office, July 18, 1877.

Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 718, of the 3rd instant, has been received, and I have to state to your Excellency that the instructions which you addressed to Mr. Consul

* No. 257*.

Reade, directing him to proceed to Varna, to visit Kustendje, and report upon the state of the Dobrudscha, are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 350.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 425.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, July* 18, 1877.

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and asked whether I was of opinion that the time was come for an attempt at mediation between the Turkish and Russian Governments.

The Duc Decazes, he said, was inclined to think that it was, but wished to know what were my views on the subject. It was believed in Paris that the Russian Government were prepared and even desirous to receive such an offer.

I said that I doubted whether it was not too soon for any such attempt to be successful.

The military position was undefined, no decisive advantage having been obtained on either side. I could hardly imagine that the Russian Government would consent to negotiate for peace without making an effort to pass the line of the Balkans, and it was evident that the conditions likely to be accepted by the Porte would differ widely according as the Russian forces had or had not established themselves to the south of that barrier.

For these reasons I thought the suggestion premature, but I would not the less watch carefully and take the earliest favourable opportunity that might present itself of promoting the object which both the French and English Governments equally had in view.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 351.

Mr. Plunkett to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 19.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Washington, July* 18, 1877.

ADMIRAL CROWN sailed from New York on the 7th, and is probably now in London. I learn also from Russian Minister that the Russian fleet in the Pacific went from San Francisco to Sandwich Islands, and has lately sailed thence under sealed orders.

No. 352.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 19.)

(No. 280.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 18, 1877, 2·30 P.M.

SIR A. KEMBALL telegraphs on 13th:—

"Commander-in-chief has advanced to-day east of Kars, beyond village of Wesin, in the direction of Kerreckdere. Russians have still a force at Yeni-keui on river, about twenty miles from Kars. They are said to be all retiring by left bank to Akhalzik, (?) and invasion abandoned. Russian left wing retiring to Igdir and Turkish right wing at Mussin, east of Balukly Gol. Ardahan about to be abandoned by Russians."

Consul at Erzeroum telegraphs:—

"On Friday a Russian division advanced on Bayazid. Turkish investing force fell back, but having been reinforced, a battle ensued, which ended in defeat of Turks. Russian garrison set free. Russians have executed thirty Russian Kurdish Chiefs, probably for mutiny or pillage."

Turkish official account admits that Russian garrison at Bayazid was released, but that Russians fell back afterwards.

No. 353.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 19.)

(No. 281.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 18, 1877, 3·30 P.M.

AARIFY PASHA has been appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No. 354.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 19.)

(No. 282.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 18, 1877, 7·30 P.M.

VICE-CONSUL SANKEY informs me that Turks have evacuated Kustendje, which has been occupied by Russians. Bulgarians appear to be committing excesses in town and neighbourhood.

No. 355.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 19.)

(No. 283.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 18, 1877.

REDIF PASHA is dismissed from the Ministry of War, but no successor is yet appointed. Abdul Kerim and Achmet Eyoub are also dismissed, and Osman Pasha appointed to the command on the Danube.

No. 356.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 19.)

(No. 284.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 19, 1877, 10·20 A.M.

GRAND VIZIER says that he has reason to suspect the designs of Montenegrins, and he wishes to know whether Mr. Green's visit to the Prince has had any result. I cannot communicate with Green in cypher.

No. 357.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 19.)

(No. 285.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 19, 1877, 10·30 A.M.

VICE-CONSUL at Philippopolis telegraphs:—

"Consular Corps, with consent of Mutessarif, have arranged with heads of Mussulman, Christian, and Jewish communities for the organization of extra police force, composed of civilians, to consist of 140 men of known respectability, to patrol streets at night, accompanied by regular police. This improvised force will contain twenty-five foreigners. This arrangement will, I trust and believe, tend to establish a feeling of mutual confidence between Mussulmans and Christians which has not existed hitherto, former especially being apprehensive of Bulgarians. Consul Blunt arrived this morning from Kezanlik."

No. 358.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 19.)

(No. 286.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 19, 1877, *noon.*

FOLLOWING telegram has been received from Consul Blunt, dated Philippopoli, 18th July:—

"When I left Kezanlik yesterday at 7 A.M., Russians were within an hour of it. Turkish army, after two days' fighting without cavalry or artillery, were obliged to

retire, Russians being in stronger force than Turks. Shipka Pass being very hazardous, Russians, after attempting cutting off the line of retreat of Turks, will seize it. Russians have burnt several villages. As I understand, there is a very small supply of provisions and ammunition at Shipka. The small passes between Mara, Slimnia, and Shipka are badly guarded; at some no artillery and no troops. From what I learn Russian military operations are conducted by the famous General Scoboleff. After leaving Kezanlik, I heard the sound of a heavy cannonade for three-and-a-half hours."

No. 359.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 19.)

(No. 287.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 19, 1877, *noon.*

SIR A. KEMBALL telegraphs on the 16th:—

"Russians have evacuated Yenikeui, and concentrated their forces between Parget and Kurukdere. It is said that they expect reinforcements here and on their left wing."

No. 360.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1877, 3·15 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 24th ultimo, you may inform Persian Government that Her Majesty's Government are prepared to give their moral support at St. Petersburgh to the formal protest which they propose to make against Russian interference with the territory along the upper valley of the Attrek, including the district of Karee Kala. Instructions will be sent accordingly to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh as soon as information is received from you that the Persian Government are about to make their protest.

No. 361.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1877, 4 P.M.

WITH reference to my telegram of the 17th instant, members of Deputation have communicated to me following telegram from their English Agent at Taganrog, as showing the inefficiency of the blockade:—

"The Greek vessels 'Aghios,' 'Joannis,' 'Theologos,' arrived; direct papers. Now loading, 'Triannos,' 'Taxiarchis,' 'Elpis,' 'Delfi,' 'Aghios;' 'Frines' also loading. 'Nikoferos' left three days ago.

"Following twelve ships left during June:—'Plessa,' 'Leonidas,' 'Panaghia,' 'Acatistu,' 'Temistocle,' 'Aspasia,' 'Joannis,' 'Scaravanga,' 'Constantinos,' 'Aghios,' 'Georgios,' 'Demetrius,' 'Nicolas,' 'Georgios Nicolas.'"

You will communicate this telegram to the Porte.

No. 362.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 337.)
Foreign Office, July 19, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 732 of the 5th instant, inclosing copy of a report from Vice-Consul Sankey, at Kustendji, on the state of the Dobrutscha since the Russians crossed the Danube, and I have to request that you will convey to

Lieutenant-Colonel Sankey my approval of his proceedings with regard to the attack by Circassians and Tartars upon the village of Gargalik.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 363.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 351.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1877.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 702 of the 30th ultimo, reporting an observation made to you by the Grand Vizier to the effect that Russia had been able to raise money at Paris through the assistance of the French Government, whilst Her Majesty's Government would give no sanction to an attempt on the part of Turkey to obtain a loan in England, and referring to the answer which you had given on a former occasion to an inquiry made by the Porte as to whether it would be permitted to raise a loan here, and I have to point out to your Excellency that Government sanction is not required for raising loans in this country, and that they have been raised here by the belligerents in former wars.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 364.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 352. Secret.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 735, Secret, of the 5th instant, giving the substance of what passed at a private audience granted to your Excellency by the Sultan on the 4th instant, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held to His Majesty, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 365.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 353.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 749 of the 10th instant, reporting that Said Pasha had been sent to you by the Sultan to draw your attention to the accounts of Russian cruelties which were continually being received from Bulgaria, and to point out that if they were persisted in, His Majesty could not be responsible for the result, and I have to state that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held to Said Pasha, urging that every possible measure should be taken to prevent the Mussulman population from retaliating upon the Christians.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 366.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 354.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 744, Secret, of the 9th instant, reporting a conversation with Said Pasha, who was sent to you by His Imperial Majesty, to inquire whether Great Britain would come to the assistance of Turkey, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held on that occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 367.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 355.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 757 of the 11th instant, forwarding a report from Mr. Consul Reade, upon the state of affairs in the Dobrudja, and I have to request that you will convey to Mr. Reade my approval of his proceedings.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 368.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 356.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1877.

WITH reference to Mr. Acting-Consul Barker's despatch to your Excellency No. 79 of the 7th instant, copy of which he has forwarded to this office, in which he states that robberies and murders are of constant occurrence in the district of Salonica, I have to request that you will call the attention of the Porte to this state of things reported by Mr. Barker.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 369.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 290.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1877.

YOUR despatch No. 379 of the 11th instant has been received, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the note which you addressed to the Russian Government on the 11th instant, calling attention to the fact that the Imperial authorities had sunk barges filled with stones in the Sulina branch of the Danube, and expressing the hope that immediate steps would be taken to prevent the destruction of the channel.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 370.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Stuart.

(No. 39.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 19, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 151 of the 7th instant, relative to the difficulty which has arisen between Turkey and Greece, owing to the expulsion from Crete of a Greek gentleman named Philou, and I have to state to you that I approve the language which you held to M. Tricoupi on this subject, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 371.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 35. Political.)

My Lord, *Adrianople, July 9, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that Raouf Pasha arrived here this evening and leaves again at 10 for Yeni-Zaghra, from whence he will proceed to the Shipka Pass. It is his Excellency who takes command of the operations for the defence of the Balkans, and not Mehmed Ali Pasha, who, I now learn, is to have the chief command of the army at Novi-Bazar.

The General informs me that the Russians appear to be advancing on Tirnova, and I hear from another source that a second column is marching towards Selvi, it may be presumed with a view to securing the Mara defile of the Balkans; 1,200 Zeibeks arrived this evening by special train from Constantinople, on their way to Kyzanlik. The men composing this detachment are not in uniform. They are a somewhat wild-looking set, and, to judge from their appearance, will require to be looked after; 400 Circassian irregular cavalry have arrived at the same time for the same destination, and more irregular troops of both classes (Zeibeks and Circassians) are to follow.

I learn from a trustworthy source that the troops who have already gone on to Kyzanlik (12,000 strong) are very scantily provided with ammunition, and that the men are complaining of this grievous piece of mismanagement on the part of the War Office. I have also reason to believe, though I cannot be quite certain of the fact, that no guns have yet been mounted in the Shipka Pass. At the same time, forty-three guns have been lying at the Adrianople station for nearly a week past. A train with forty more field guns is expected to-morrow. The Russians, if it be true that they are already near Tirnova, may make a dash and seize the pass before it can be defended.

I regret to state that reports, very likely exaggerated ones, have been brought over the Balkans by fugitives relative to excesses said to have been committed by the Russian troops and Bulgarian population against the inhabitants of Mussulman villages near Sistov. These reports are beginning to disturb the minds of the Turks in this vilayet, leading them to look with distrust on the Christians, and especially the Bulgarians. So far, however, from all I hear (and this is confirmed by Ali Pasha and the local Chief of the Police), these latter are quiet and show no signs of hostility.

Upon the whole, considering the composition of the army at Kyzanlik, and the uneasy feeling to which I have alluded, and which has its source in Bulgaria proper, it appears to me that my presence in the north of this vilayet has become desirable. I have, therefore, decided to leave this for Eski-Zaghra the day after to-morrow.

As I have the advantage of knowing Raouf Pasha intimately, and enjoy his confidence, I have reason to hope that, in the event of my being called upon to bring to his Excellency's notice any untoward occurrences, I shall be enabled to do so with effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 372.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 36. Political.)

My Lord, *Adrianople, July 10, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship inclosed a general report which I have just received from Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert, relative to the state of the Sandjak of Philippopolis, and giving an account of a visit made by him to Otloukeui, Avrad-Alan, and Isladi.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 372.

Acting Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Sir, *Philippopolis, July 5, 1877.*

THE general report which I should, according to the instructions in your Circular of the 13th ultimo, have addressed to you at the end of last month, has been delayed by a journey to the northern parts of this sandjak and into the Caza of Isladi, which the lawlessness lately prevalent and reported by me on the 14th ultimo induced me to undertake.

The result of my observations and inquiries I now venture to embody in my general report.

In the region which I visited, I found the chief subject of complaint to be the frequent robberies committed by Circassians; the behaviour of the Turkish officials, soldiery, and population, appeared generally satisfactory, the Bulgarian peasantry everywhere testifying that the late truculent behaviour of the Mussulmans towards them has ceased; the militia, mostly Pomaks, quartered in the larger villages were, the Bulgarian inhabitants told me in reply to my inquiries, as orderly as could be wished.

The above statements are, I believe, applicable to the state of things throughout this sandjak, with the difference that in other parts robberies are less frequent, owing to the absence of Circassians.

The village of Otloukeui, twelve hours from Philippopolis, to which I proceeded on the 28th ultimo, has suffered most from Circassian depredations. I there gathered particulars regarding no less than sixteen robberies committed in the neighbourhood during the space of six weeks, and in one instance accompanied by murder. The following, in order of date, are the most serious of these cases:—

On May 15, Christo Stoyanoff, on his way from Otloukeui to Orchanić, was robbed of his horse and about 10,000 piastres in "caimé" by Circassians, who also beat him severely.

On June 6, Joan Philipoff was robbed near Popintza, between Tatar-Bazardjik and Otloukeui, of 40 piastres, and wounded on the cheek with a knife by Circassians.

On the same day, at the same place, the same Circassians robbed Stoyo Velkoff, of Smolsko, of two horses and 175 piastres.

On June 7, Nedello Sarijoglou and a Turk were robbed near Poibrero, the former of his clothes, and the latter of his saddle-bags.

On the same day a party of Circassians entered the village of Smolsko, and carried off two mares, and shot dead a cow.

On June 8, Thomé Pekloff was robbed of his horse by Circassians between Tatar-Bazardjik and Otloukeui.

On June 9, Nicholo Windoff was robbed of his horse and shoes by Circassians near Otloukeui.

On the same day Christo Stanat was robbed of his horse, and stabbed in the leg by Circassians at a spot half an hour from Otloukeui, on the road to Streldja.

On June 20, Stoyan Thodoroff was robbed by Circassians near Popnitza of 5,000 piastres and his horse.

On June 21, Stoyno Tsoulsek, who used to live in his field an hour and a half from Otloukeui, was murdered during the night by some persons unknown, supposed to be Circassians, who afterwards carried off his two oxen. Tsoulsek's son and a servant were witnesses of the crime, but, owing to the darkness and the fact that the assassins had their faces blackened and wrapped in folds of cloth, failed to recognize them.

On June 27, Simon Novakoff, a shepherd, was robbed of his horse and clothes by Circassians at about an hour's distance from Otloukeui.

On the same night the Circassians carried off from a "mandra," or sheepfold, two hours from Otloukeui, two horses belonging to the shepherd Stephan Patuff.

Besides the robberies around Otloukeui, four horses had recently been stolen from Avrad-Alan, five horses from some Karakatchan shepherds near Krastowo, and two horses near the same village from a Greek of Stanimako.

I may here also mention that on the day previous to my starting from Philippopoli complaint was made to me by Mr. M. Milcoff, a naturalized British subject of this town, that five horses belonging to him had the day before been stolen from his farm at Krastowo. I accordingly addressed an official request to the Mutasserif that he should immediately take the steps necessary for recovering the stolen

animals and punishing the thieves. On my return here I had the satisfaction of learning that all M. Milcoff's horses had been brought back, and that the thieves, two Circassians of Emizly, in the Caza of Tatar-Bazardjik, were lodged in prison here.

In almost all the above robberies the perpetrators, when seen, were noticed to have their features disguised or concealed.

Before starting for Otloukcui, I had called on the Mutessarif, and observed to him that the lawlessness prevalent in the northern parts of the sandjak called for energetic measures of repression. His Excellency immediately, and in my presence, gave orders to the chief of the police to despatch a troop of a dozen cavalry to the region in question. This force reached Otloukcui on the 29th ultimo, the day after my arrival there.

On the same day the militia troops, possibly stimulated by my presence, frustrated an attempted robbery in one of the neighbouring sheep-folds, and pursued the Circassians, who escaped, but left behind them two horses, which turned out to be those stolen from Patuff on the 27th instant, and they likewise arrested three Circassians disguised in Turkish garb, armed, and unprovided with passports, whom they found prowling in the outskirts of the village. On one of these individuals was found a wristband pierced with slugs and slightly bloodstained. That they were not innocent persons was, moreover, proved by one of them, in the presence of the Mudir of Otloukcui, threatening the Bulgarian Tchorbadji with vengeance in case the latter should bear witness against him. The three prisoners were afterwards sent, handcuffed, to Bazardjik, where the victims of the recent robberies will have to go in order, if possible, to identify them.

Being curious to ascertain by personal investigation the state of affairs in the adjoining Caza of Isladi, whence all the Circassian brigands are said to come, I on the 29th proceeded from Otloukcui to the town of Isladi, by way of Petrich.

From inquiries amongst the Bulgarian inhabitants of Isladi and the neighbouring village of Pyrtop, I found that cattle-lifting was relatively uncommon in this district. The Kaïmakam, a Circassian himself, was highly spoken of by the Christians; but although he keeps the Circassians under control within the boundaries of his caza, he is unable or cares not to prevent them from plundering outside its limits.

In this out-of-the-way district I was told by the natives no European had ever before set foot. Perhaps it is for this very reason that the Christian and Mussulman inhabitants live there in greater harmony than is the case on this side of the Orta Balkans.

The Kaïmakam was, I found, cognizant of the robberies near Otloukcui; but he informed me confidentially that the real offenders were certain Bulgarian "comitagees" of the village of Koulanlar, in his district, who had lain hid in the mountains ever since the insurrection; but he added that he hoped soon to catch them.

Now it so happened that, when at Otloukcui, I was applied to on behalf of these same individuals, whose intercessors said they had long been desirous of returning quietly to their homes, but dreaded falling into the hands of Reshid Bey, a Turkish magnate, possessing large estates at Koulanlar and great influence over the Isladi Administration. They, therefore, sent to ask me whether it would be possible that they should be allowed to settle at Otloukcui, instead of returning to Koulanlar. Their names are:—

Gherghi and Nichola Elioff, brothers, and their father, Elia Nicoloff, and Tsatso Koukoushoff.

I cannot believe, as the Turkish authorities of Isladi wish to make out, that these men are guilty of the recent robberies, horses being a kind of property which it would be next to impossible for them to keep or dispose of. I would have advised them to come out of their hiding-places without further delay, but that the authorities of this district would probably consider it their duty to give them up to the Isladi police. I would, therefore, beg to suggest that the case of these refugees be made known to the Governor-General of Adrianople, whom your influence, sir, if you consider the circumstances warrant its being exerted, may prevail upon to give orders that the said refugees be permitted to settle at Otloukcui without molestation; or, if it be thought necessary that they should return to Koulanlar, that effectual steps be taken to protect them from the retribution contemplated by Reshid Bey, who is said to nourish against them a long-standing grudge.

From Isladi, I returned on the 30th ultimo to Otloukcui by way of Pyrtop, Duschanzy, and Avrad-Alan, and on the following day proceeded to Bazardjik by way of Streldja, Aivadjik, and Eurelli.

To cut short this already long despatch, I will only add, in connection with my recent tour, that the functionary whose venality and disgusting vices, while he was Mudir of Otloukcui, induced Mr. Baring and myself to make frequent representations for the purpose of his removal, has at last been superseded, and that the present Governors both of Otloukcui and Avrad-Alan appear to give general satisfaction.

The troop of cavalry sent to Otloukcui now appear to me, considering the mountainous nature of the region, to be useless; and I have advised the Governor to recall it, and send instead some twenty or thirty infantry to occupy the now deserted "karaouls," or guard-houses, lying between Otloukcui and Isladi. Assisted by a dozen inhabitants of the former village, whom the Kaïmakam of Bazardjik has licensed to carry arms, such a force, so placed, might soon restore security. The task could be further facilitated by giving the Bulgarian auxiliaries I have mentioned permission to fire upon the robbers, which they have asked for in writing, but which has been hitherto withheld.

I noticed at Streldja about half-a-dozen really handsome cottages in course of construction, containing five or six rooms each. These are being erected for the Mussulman inhabitants, the Christian population alone having had dwellings made for them during last autumn and winter. Abro Effendi explains to me that the Commission is spending no more, proportionately, for the Mussulman than it did for the Bulgarian villagers, but that the Mussulmans of Streldja, wishing to have larger dwellings, defray the extra costs themselves.

The following is a list, given me by Abro Effendi, of the houses built since the resumption of the undertaking, or in course of construction:—

At Streldja	88
Batak	50
Derwent (Clissoura)	75
Tcheumlek-Yenikeui	81
Peroustitza	70
Yassikoria and Zdrebitchka	56
Lesbnik, Krastowo, Ouzoün-Gheren, and Zindjirly	54
Boïcowo	10
Total	484

Besides the above, twenty houses are being constructed at Dedowo by the inhabitants, with the help of money granted to them by the Central Relief Committee of Constantinople.

The severe losses suffered by the peasantry during last year's troubles are likely to be, to a great extent, compensated for by this year's harvest, which is on all hands pronounced to be the most bountiful in the recollection of living man. In spite of the comparative misery prevalent last winter, a very fair amount of seed was put in the ground. At Otloukcui, for instance, every inch of ploughable ground was sown; and in no village, however destitute, I may safely say, was less than half the usual quantity sown. The continual rains occurring in May and June enabled the people to continue sowing until a fortnight ago, and now the moist condition of the soil allows them to break it up much earlier than usual for the next winter crops.

I have the honour to report, in conclusion, that Hassan, the son of Deli Mehmet of Sitowa, one of the Turks implicated in the massacres, and for whose capture a reward was offered by the Commission, was brought here the other day under arrest. I am not yet acquainted with the particulars of his capture, but will endeavour to ascertain and report them in my next despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 373.

Consul Carruthers to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(Confidential.)
My Lord, *Taganrog, July 12, 1877.*

INTELLIGENCE reached this place some days since that a fresh body of troops, consisting of 17,000 men, had been ordered from the environs of Koursk, to proceed by rail, viâ Rostoff, to Vladi Kaokaz, being urgently called for in the

Caucasian territory and Armenia. I have heard to-day that the number is to be increased to 40,000 men.

The Don Cossack territory is reported to be denuded of male population to such an extent that an insufficient number of hands remain at home to harvest the crops, which are expected to be very heavy this season.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. F. CARRUTHERS.

No. 374.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 20.)

(No. 705.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 12, 1877.

I AM informed by Mr. Calvert from Philippopolis that the Governor of that place, referring to the comparative quiet still happily prevailing in his district, told him that he feared the task of preserving order would soon become much more difficult, as he had received orders to levy volunteers, who would be concentrated in the town to await the orders of Raouf Pasha, who has been appointed to direct the defence of the Balkan Passes.

I have communicated this information to the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 375.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 20.)

(No. 760.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 12, 1877.

THE further accounts that I receive from Kustendjie and the Dobrudja prove that the reports spread as to the excesses and outrages on the Christians in that district were greatly exaggerated.

I have received information to that effect from Captain Drummond, of Her Majesty's ship "Rapid." He informs me, in a letter dated the 9th instant, that the state of the Dobrudja is much more favourable than it was, and that "stories of plunder are fewer, and of murder none. It seems," Captain Drummond writes, "that the Tartars and Circassians have gone south, partly through fear of the Russians and partly because there is nothing left to steal." He adds that the inhabitants of Garghaleh, a village which had been plundered, are going back to get in their crops. He considers Kustendjie quite free from any danger from plunderers. The whole Mahomedan population had left the place, and, Captain Drummond believes, the whole country. Only the authorities and a few hundred troops remain, and there were two Turkish ships waiting to take these away.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 376.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 20.)

(No. 768.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 13, 1877.

I INCLOSE an extract from a private letter to me from Mr. Consul Blunt, dated the 5th instant, respecting the relations between Christians and Mussulmans in the Vilayet of Adrianople. Although where the Russians have appeared after crossing the Danube the Christians, as might have been expected, received them with demonstrations of joy, the Proclamation of the Emperor calling upon the Bulgarians to rise *en masse* against the Turks has not yet, happily, produced any effect. Persons well acquainted with the European Provinces of Turkey are of opinion that it will not induce the Bulgarians to take up arms against the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 376.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

(Private.)
(Extract.) *Adrianople, July* 5, 1877.

THERE is no doubt that emissaries are about trying to create trouble by exciting the mutual distrust of the Turks and Christians. So far, however, I have observed or heard of no symptoms of hostility among the Bulgarians in Adrianople and its neighbourhood, and Mr. Calvert's accounts from Philippopolis are reassuring. The very abundant crops keep the country people hard at work and in good humour. Should the Turks meet with reverses, the Bulgarians, in some localities in the Balkans, may attempt a rising, but I do not anticipate a general movement against the Mahommedan population.

The Christians may welcome the Russians and offer them bread and salt should they come, but I do not think they will take up arms to fight for them. The Turks are quiet, and from all I observe I am under the impression that they will continue so; even if the Russians are victorious, they will not molest the Christians if the Christians do not molest them. I should also remark that the recent successes of the Turks in Montenegro, and the favourable turn which the war in Asia is assuming, are influencing the minds of the Christians, and cannot but have a salutary effect in repressing any disposition to rise.

I propose leaving this on Monday or Tuesday for Jambol, Yeni-Zaghra, Eski-Zaghra, Kizanlik, and Shipka. The four first-named districts are Bulgarian centres on the southern slopes of the Balkans; the Christian population far outnumbers that of the Mussulmans. I hope to be able to learn something about the attitude and state of feeling of Turks and Bulgarians there. While at Shipka Pass, should I hear of anything in the bordering districts beyond the Balkans which it would be desirable to inquire into, I suppose your Excellency will not object to my visiting those parts.

No. 377.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 20.)

(No. 769.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 13, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis, reporting the movement of troops and the attitude of the Mussulman and Christian population in the Vilayet of Adrianople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 377.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, July* 10, 1877.

MR. BLUNT, who leaves to-morrow for Yeni-Zaara, Eskki-Zaara, and Kyzanlik, told me to keep your Excellency informed of all passing events of importance in this district in his absence. This I shall of course not fail to do, to the best of my ability and means at disposal.

In the meanwhile I have the honour to report that the local Government continues to display great activity in forwarding troops to the seat of war on the Danube, and that during the last few days the following reinforcements were, I believe, despatched to Yeni-Zaara, Eskki-Zaara, and Kyzanlik, viz., 2,208 Mustafiz, 1,200 Zeibeks, 700 Circassian cavalry, 60 mounted zaptiehs, and 400 Adrianople Mustafiz.

A force of other 1,200 Mustafiz of this vilayet is likewise being called out for active service, while the reserves of Yalinzlé Solitaino are to do garrison duty in Adrianople and other places.

I take this opportunity of informing your Excellency that in consequence of rumours the last few days that the Russians are advancing into Bulgaria and are marching upon Gabrova, the inhabitants of this city are beginning to manifest some uneasiness, and talk of taking refuge in Rodosto, Constantinople, and Malta.

I may here add that, although the Turkish population seems to show some alarm

at the progress made by the Russians they are far from evincing any hostile spirit, or menacing attitude towards their Christian fellow-subjects. On the contrary, I am told they unite and dread the appearance of the Russians.

A traveller from Hirsova related to my Dragoman the other day that the Bulgarians were guilty of horrible acts of cruelty on Circassian captives, whom they put to death by making a hole on the top of the man's head, filling it with tar, and setting it on fire. How far this story is true I have no means of ascertaining.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

No. 378.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 770.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroom reporting the state of distress existing in the district of Van owing to the numerous acts of pillage committed by the Koords.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 378.

Consul Zohrab to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Erzeroom, June 28, 1877.*

I REPORTED in my telegram of yesterday the condition of the district of Van. It appears that the majority of the Kurds who were collected for the purpose of forming a cavalry brigade for the Van column under Faik Pasha, instead of joining their colours spread themselves over the Van district and pillaged every village they could get to; the work of destruction was so thoroughly done that the villagers have been left without food, and now live on roots collected in hills. The distress must be great, for the Governor of Van has asked to be allowed to distribute to the people the grain arriving there for the Government. I fear the Moosh and Bitlis districts are not much better off, and as the plains of Passin and Alashgird have been laid waste by the war, and a considerable portion of the plain of Erzeroom has been left uncared for, this portion of Asia will next year be visited by famine.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. ZOHRAB.

No. 379.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 771.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a telegram which has been addressed to the Porte by the Sub-Governor of Kizanlik, reporting the barbarous treatment of the Mahommedan population in Bulgaria by the Russian troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 379.

The Sub-Governor of Kizanlik to the Sublime Porte.

(Traduction.)
(Télégraphique.) *Le 28 Juin, 1877 (v. s.)*

LE Samedi 25 Juin une division Russe arrivée aux villages de Kestan et de Bélovan, dépendence de Tirnova, a publié des bulletins de victoire. Elle a commencé par désarmer les Musulmans, dont elle a distribué les armes aux Bulgares.

Dans le but de venger les derniers événements l'ennemi a procédé et continue à

procéder par l'assassinat des Musulmans, hommes, femmes, et enfants, qu'il rencontre et par l'incendie de leurs villages. Les Russes ont fait aussi leur entrée à Tirnova, chef-lieu d'arrondissement. Nous en avons reçu la nouvelle des nommés Abdullah Himmet Rachid, Mehemed, autre Abdullah et Suleiman, habitants les trois premiers de Belovan et le reste de Kestan, lesquels sont arrivés ici tout éplorés, n'ayant pu échapper qu'à grande peine aux mains des envahisseurs.

Les populations Musulmanes se trouvent à la merci de l'ennemi. La situation qui leur est faite ne laisse pas d'être navrante.

Nous sollicitons l'adoption des mesures propres à délivrer l'Islam des cruautés barbares de l'ennemi.

No. 380.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 773. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a report and two private letters from Captains McCalmont and Trotter, relating to the military operations in Armenia, which your Lordship, I venture to think, will read with interest. As they have only just been received, I have not had time to have copies made of them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 380.

Captain McCalmont to Major-General Sir C. Dickson.

My dear Sir Collingwood, *Erzeroum, June 26, 1877.*

I RECEIVED your letter last night. Trotter and I have just returned from the front, where latterly we had a very lively and exciting time, and, I am glad to say, a time of some advantage, slight though it may be, to the Turks. After the disaster on the 16th Moukhtar acted with great decision, and withdrawing nine battalions from Olti immediately, he was enabled to reinforce the right column to eighteen or twenty battalions with which he marched from the intrenched position at Delibaba on the 20th to a strong position on some hills at Haliaz, about ten miles south-east of the Delibaba defile, overlooking the Russian camp. He thus lost no time and, I think, surprised the Russians. Indeed, if he had had anything like our horse artillery at his disposal on the morning of the 21st he would have handled them very severely. This mountainous country is, however, very difficult for field-guns, and Moukhtar's great caution in using the few he has prevents his deriving much advantage from them. He never places them in a forward position.

You will have heard all about the battle on the 21st. It was undoubtedly a most sanguinary one. The Turkish infantry, at any rate with the exception of three or four battalions, of whose *esprit* I have some doubts, behaved splendidly. Their coolness, intrepidity, and the admirable way their skirmishers advanced to the attack was most remarkable. There must be a number of good officers, too, among them, on account of all apparent absence of confusion, and although there are, no doubt, many more bad officers and men (as I have been told by the officers), all in all the army here is much better in every way than one is led to expect. I suppose they must be beaten, but if so, the defeat will be owing to the superior numbers and resources of the Russians. Of course the latter have such a preponderance of numbers that as soon as Kars falls the military occupation of the country by them is a certainty. The Turks here think and believe that Kars is impregnable, but, however that may be, I think and hope that the Turks will give the Russians a great deal more trouble than they anticipate.

I suppose the battle on the 21st can lead to no result except the satisfaction of gaining prestige for Moukhtar and encouraging the men. The advantage, slight as it was, has been very dearly bought. There must have been nearly 500 killed on the Turkish side, and we have seen hundreds of wounded all along the roads from Delibaba to this. Whether the Turks inflicted anything so severe upon the Russians is a question. It seems impossible to teach the former not to fire at random, while

the Russians are most careful to conceal themselves. They must have lost heavily in the attacks on the Turkish left. We were very lucky in being able to see all the movements of troops on our side for the four days previously to the battle, having been at the head-quarter camp at service when the troops from Olti arrived, and subsequently marched with the other battalions, &c., to Delibaba. We saw a good deal of outpost work on the afternoon preceding the fight, and great fun it was, though I should say the amount of information obtained of the enemy's intentions, &c., was not in proportion to the numbers of Bashi-Bazouks, Circassians, and so-called regular cavalry employed. Occasionally a few dragoons would send a small crowd of these fellows before them like chaff. During the battle we spent the greater part of the day with three guns with which Moukhtar took up also his position, and had a very lively and at times unpleasantly exciting afternoon, under shell-fire from some Russian guns which gave us their undivided attention. It was marvellous that our loss under the circumstances was not more severe. The shells seemed to be everywhere about us, yet only ten men out of 400 were killed and three horses. Our so-called cavalry, drawn up in a heterogeneous collection of troops, had a charge just before sunset, and a good many Circassians were killed. I saw them going into action and returning. The undulation of the ground impeded our view of what occurred at close quarters, but I imagine the Russian riflemen across the valley peppered the advanced troops, and threw the column into confusion. At any rate, they were very soon seen coming back as best they could. I was told that this column was charged by two regiments of Russian dragoons, and that the latter, although they immediately routed our cavalry, suffered much on their return from the fire of our infantry, but this story seems doubtful. We had a great number, I should say nearly 2,000, of these more or less wild horsemen on our side.

The Circassians are splendid fellows and fine horsemen. They are better probably than the great majority of the Cossacks, but it would be a most difficult matter to get them organized to act with the cohesion of regular cavalry regiments.

The latest news with us is that the Russian column, after the battle of Haliaz, retired across the mountains into the Papin plain, where it is to unite with another column said to be coming from Akalzig. This is Zohrab's information. The Russian troops certainly moved in that direction as far as one could see, and if this news is true, I fear the Turks can do nothing but fall back on Kuprekoi, thence to the Dane-Bozoun and this place. If the Russians push on vigorously there is nothing to detain them, though a few weeks' delay would make a great difference in favour of the Turks.

Another column of 10,000 is also approaching by way of Meshinjud, and the telegraph wire is cut at Korassan and between us and the camp at Servin. We expect to hear from the General this day.

Give my kind regards to Fife, and believe me, &c.

(Signed) HUGH McCALMONT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 380.

Captain McCalmont and Captain Trotter to Major-General Sir A. Kemball.

Erzeroum, June 27, 1877.

Sir,

WE have the honour to report, for your information, a statement of our proceedings since the afternoon of the 16th instant, when we left you in Khorassan on your return from the engagement at Tahir-kui:—

16th June.—On the evening of the 16th, we proceeded to the head-quarters' camp at Zewin, arriving there about 10 P.M. On our way we met, *en route* for Khorassan, a strong force of cavalry, about 800 in number, composed of Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians, under Mustapha Pasha. On arrival at camp, we were received by the Muchir, who told us that although his right wing had certainly suffered a reverse, yet that a retreat had been effected on a strong position near Delibaba. Later on in the night, we received a message that "the guns" had arrived safely at Delibaba from the scene of action. He subsequently informed us that although two regiments had been "decimés," the loss of the other battalions had not been severe.

17th and 18th June.—The next and following day was spent in the ordinary routine of camp duty. During this time, however, energetic measures were taken for the reinforcement of the right column. Three battalions infantry and a battery of artillery (6 guns) were reported on the 17th in the vicinity of Hassankaleh, *en route* from Erzeroum, while nine battalions, with some mountain-guns, and two troops of cavalry (Zaptiehs) were on their way from Olti. These latter arrived at Zewin on the evening of the 18th. The force at Zewin was thus increased to a strength of 24 battalions, 2 batteries field-artillery, about 16 mountain-pieces, 600 regular cavalry, with about an equal number of irregulars.

19th June.—At noon on the 19th, 5 battalions infantry, 1 battery field-artillery, 300 regular cavalry, and as many irregulars, and 4 mountain-pieces were detached from the head-quarters camp, and marched to Khorassan *en route* to join the right wing at Delibaba. We proceeded to Khorassan the same evening. During the night the Muchir passed through the village to Delibaba.

20th June.—The next morning at 5:30, the five Zewin battalions, with their provision and ammunition train, was crossing the Araxes by the ford, the river being just sufficiently shallow to enable the passage of the infantry to be accomplished. The arrangements for crossing were well conducted, and there was little or no confusion. The men formed up by companies and marched forward on arrival on the right bank. At 9:30 A.M., these battalions were within one mile of the position subsequently described near Delibaba.

At Tai-khoja we passed two battalions encamped.

We found the force under Achmed Pasha in a strongly-intrenched position two miles north-west of the entrance to the Delibaba defile, his right wing consisting of 14 battalions infantry and 3 field-guns and mountain-guns (?), occupying the heights overlooking the road from Delibaba to Khorassan and Koprikui, although the actual exit from the defile was cut off from view by a long projecting spur. The left wing—9 battalions infantry and 9 field-guns—occupied the crest of a lower range of hills on the other side of the road. The line formed a re-entering angle, bringing a cross fire to bear on the road for a considerable portion of its length. The cavalry, regular and irregular, were at this time on outpost duty some miles to the front, their reserve being near Delibaba. We were informed that the Russian position was some four hours (twelve miles) distant, in a south-east direction. The troops of the left wing were under arms on our arrival, and the order for its advance was given at 7:30 A.M. The battalions moved from the heights with alacrity and enthusiasm, cheering repeatedly. The infantry column proceeded by a circuitous route over the hills to the left of the defile. The artillery, covered by cavalry, went through the Delibaba defile; the troops forming the right column moved off some forty minutes subsequently, passing over high undulating ground to the right of the defile. The Muchir and the head-quarters staff accompanied this column. The battalions marched in columns of companies, their flanks and front covered by skirmishers. The nature of the ground and possible proximity of the enemy rendered the utmost caution necessary, especially as regards the artillery. After passing over much hilly ground, at 12·45 the column was halted in a valley near the small village of Haidar-keui; a body of cavalry, regular and irregular, about 1,000 strong, being drawn up on high ground in the vicinity, affording an extensive view to the front, strong patrols were dispatched in the direction of the Russian camp for some miles. At 2 P.M., when the ground was reported clear, cavalry and infantry again moved to the front, the former by the right flank, gradually extending themselves over the open ground which formed the scene of the action on the following day; the latter, in the course of the afternoon, took up positions on the ranges of the hills separating the Haidar-keui and Yeshekiliaz valleys, and there bivouacked. Meanwhile the scouts of the cavalry pushed forward in swarms to within two miles of the Russian camp, engaged the enemy's outposts, when several skirmishes of a trivial nature occurred. The loss in these skirmishes was reported to be three casualities on the Turkish and seven on the Russian side. The enemy, however, made no serious attempt to oppose the Turkish outposts, and, as a rule, retired. A great deal of information was thus obtained, and our cavalry occupied a very advanced position during the night. The disposition of the troops in bivouac on the night of the 20th was as follows:—12 field-guns and 6 battalions infantry on the hills and defiles between the villages of Haidar-keui and Yeshekiliaz, overlooking the village and plain of Yeshekiliaz; 8 battalions were "échelonned" along the hills to the extreme right, and three others on an eminence on the left of the Delibaba road. The remaining battalions were in reserve in rear of the position.

21st June.—Shortly after 4 o'clock on the morning of the 21st, the troops left their bivouac in a drizzling rain; the greater part of the infantry marched by paths over the hills on right to the south of the Yeshekiliaz Valley, while another column descended and passed through the village, and again ascended the high ground in front, where they awaited orders to move into position. Three field-guns followed the infantry;

the remainder, with the exception of three which came forward later in the day, remained in the positions occupied the previous night.

Until about 8·30 A.M., when the troops again began a forward movement, the hills in front, some of which overlooked the enemy's camp some three miles further up the valley, were being carefully watched by the Turkish cavalry, regular and irregular. By 10 A.M., the infantry had moved and taken up a position immediately behind the crest of these hills, five battalions being retained as a reserve in rear. The main body of the cavalry was distributed on the flanks under cover, the right wing, consisting of about 1,000 regulars and Circassians, under Mustapha Pasha, the left, of about an equal number of Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians, under the command of Moussa Pasha. Some small bodies were, however, still employed in reconnoitring to the front.

The range of hills which formed the main position of the Turkish troops may be described generally as lying perpendicularly across the most easterly route from Delibaba to Bayazid, the left being separated from the long range to the right by a deep, but not narrow, ravine, through which passes the road. On the left is a high conical hill, the approaches to which were occupied by our troops. Whether it would have been possible to have dragged artillery on to its summit it is impossible, with our limited knowledge of the ground, to say, but had it been so, the possession of it by the enemy would have enabled him to explode the whole line; and for this reason, in all probability, the position occupied by the battalions on the left was the object of some fighting throughout the day. The Russians made two desperate assaults on it, one of which succeeded, although, with the aid of reinforcements, the place was subsequently re-captured by the Turks.

On the right of the road the hills above mentioned overlooked undulating ground, extending right down to the enemy's camp on the left bank of the River Sari, and affording great opportunities for the concealment of the enemy's troops, a circumstance of which they fully availed themselves, as at no time were their reserves visible, and the actual force engaged on their side was unknown to our Commander-in-chief. (Their numbers were estimated at 4 regiments of Dragoons, 6 of Cossacks, 10 battalions infantry—8,000—and 30 guns, but no more than 10 field-guns were brought into action as far as we are aware.)

The undulating nature of the ground made the Turkish position a bad one for the artillery, and the use of the few field guns they employed resolved itself, as far as regards the Turks, into a duel between them and three of the enemy's guns, which lasted during the whole afternoon. To shell the Russian infantry from the height was, indeed, all but impracticable during the action, for, with the exception of a few troops of cavalry, seen occasionally for a few seconds, their troops were, along a great extent of the front, quite invisible, except to the infantry immediately opposed to them. The valley to the extreme right, bounded by the River Sári, was occupied by the cavalry under Mustapha Pasha. The length of our position, from the conical hill on left to the Sári River on right, must have been at least three miles; the direction was nearly north and south.

At 12 o'clock the battle began by a gun from the Russian right, followed by a brisk musketry fire on both sides on the hills on our left, at this time occupied by two battalions. The few cavalry skirmishers on the right front of our position were now rapidly driven in; a general advance from the heights in skirmishing order of the Turkish first line ensued; on the right was a regiment of chasseurs. This battalion moved forward in admirable order, and there was a noticeable absence of confusion throughout. The supports, also in open order, numbering about one-fourth of the advanced line, followed at an interval of some 300 yards. We had taken up our position on a hill in the right centre, where was also the Muchir, and whence we were enabled to obtain a commanding view of the engagement. At the commencement, this point was taken up by two mountain guns, with two battalions behind the crest in support. These small guns, however, were not sufficiently advanced to be of service, and at 1·15 they were sent forward 1,000 yards, their place being occupied by the three field pieces. In the meantime the advancing infantry on our front became engaged with the enemy's first line, which, from the nature of the ground, was hidden from our view, and were also subjected to shell-fire from two of the enemy's guns and rockets, from a party about 2,000 yards distant. The latter, however, soon retired before the advancing riflemen, having discharged some thirty or forty rockets, apparently without much effect. The cavalry in the valley behind us took ground to the right, and moved forward to gain the flank of the enemy's skirmishers, but quickly retired to their original position. On the left a desperate effort was made by the

Russian skirmishers to storm our position on the left, but the attack was unsuccessful; the enemy was driven back in confusion, two shells from our battery adding to their discomfiture. The advanced lines of skirmishers were now hotly engaged along the whole line, but more vigorously towards the right flank, and there appeared to be some delay in sending forward the supporting battalions. The first line had advanced with the greatest gallantry. At 1·45 the supporting battalions advanced. Their place was taken by the reserve. An order was given for the reinforcement by two battalions of the extreme left, and two battalions were also moved from the left centre to the right, where the fighting was now most severe. The lines of fire of the contending skirmishers swayed to and fro. Our view was now greatly obscured by a violent thunderstorm, accompanied by heavy showers of rain and hail.

At 2·15 an excellent shot from our battery at two troops of cavalry which momentarily appeared in moving to the flank sent them in confusion to the rear. In addition to the casual shell-fire with which we had, up to the present, been assailed, three of the enemy's guns now came into action and opened fire upon us at 4,000 yards. A duel ensued between our guns and theirs, which lasted for four hours or more, during which the shells kept bursting upon the hill with unceasing regularity. The infantry in support of the guns were consequently drawn up in line under the crest of the hill, and, considering the heavy fire, their casualties were not numerous. Indeed, the troops in this respect were marvellously lucky. Ten men and three horses were killed. The Muchir, notwithstanding, continued to direct the operations from this point during the whole of the cannonade. At 4·15 a field gun came into action on our right flank, and did good service, notwithstanding the shell-fire brought to bear upon it. One of the enemy's guns is said to have been dismounted by it. The fighting on the left flank became most severe, and the enemy succeeded in storming the position which they had failed to take at the commencement of the day. Two battalions, one of chasseurs, which had arrived on the field late in the afternoon from Olti, were immediately hurried forward to retake the position, a feat which they performed with much gallantry, though with heavy loss. The fighting continued on this flank at close quarters, and the enemy was eventually driven into the ravine, where the Turks and Russians contended till after sunset. There was also some cavalry fighting on this flank. We were unable to see what occurred, but were informed that on this occasion the Russian dragoons skirmished dismounted. At 6 P.M. the right wing of cavalry, which had remained for some time drawn up in column along the meadows towards the river, advanced in a not very collected formation towards the Russian left flank, with the object, as we were informed, of engaging two dragoon regiments. Their movements during the latter part of the advance were concealed from view. It is probable that the leading horsemen were taken in flank by the enemy's infantry fire from the right bank of the Sarud River. Whether they succeeded in meeting the dragoons or not, the result was a precipitate retreat in confusion, with a loss of thirty men and horses. (It is reported that an engagement actually occurred on this occasion between the opposing cavalry, that the Turks were immediately thrown into confusion by the Russian dragoons, but that the latter suffered severely from the fire of some Turkish infantry in returning.) At sunset firing ceased along the lines, the Turkish troops maintaining a position some 1,200 yards in advance of that taken up by them in the morning. The ground on the left was not occupied during the night by either of the belligerents. The troops under the orders of the Muchir numbered 24 battalions, with about 1,200 cavalry, with 12 field and 11 mountain guns. Of the infantry not more than 12 battalions were actually engaged with the enemy, and only 6 field guns were brought into action.

During the night the Russians carried off their dead, with the exception of three bodies on our extreme right. It is therefore impossible to make even a rough estimate of their losses, but the Turkish authorities believe, and probably not without reason, that the Russian losses exceed their own. The latter, as officially estimated, amounts to 400 killed and about the same number wounded; but, according to a confidential report, the loss is stated at 2,000 casualties. On a reconnaissance of the ground the following afternoon we saw at least fifty dead bodies to the extreme right, at a point where the lines of skirmishers appear to have remained stationary for a considerable time; for, on counting the number of cartridge-cases near one man, we found no less than 120, and there were many other heaps in the immediate vicinity almost as large. Almost on the same ground we saw similar heaps of Berdan cartridges, fired by the Russians, from which we inferred that they had been not less sparing of their ammunition. We may here mention that each Turkish soldier carried with him into action 150 rounds of ammunition, most of which—as the pouch contains but 50—were

carried in bands sewn into the men's tunics, or in bags suspended over their shoulders. As far as we could observe, the ammunition-trains were kept well up to the front, and we heard of no cases of failure in the supply.

22*nd June*.—On the following morning the Russians had struck their tents and withdrawn from the ground held by them on the previous day. Long lines of carts were seen moving in the direction of Bayazid. Troops were drawn up in two lines of skirmishers to cover the retreat, with strong flanking detachments of cavalry. On the Turkish side the guns were advanced to a knoll 1,000 yards in front of their previous position, and a few shots from time to time exchanged with a battery occupying ground above the site of the Russian camp. But no attempt was made to harass the retreating column. The Muchir was apparently in doubt as to the object of the retreat, whether it was a reality or a feint to draw him on, and he probably wished to avoid the chances of another engagement.

23*rd June*.—On the 23rd, however, he made a further advance, and occupied with six battalions the ground in front of the position on the left, where the heavy fighting of the 21st had occurred. He probably would have attacked on the morning of the 24th. News, however, had meantime arrived of the rapid advance from Kars of a force of 10,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry, which was now approaching Khorassan. This necessitated a retrograde movement on the part of the Muchir, of which it is now unnecessary for us to report.

In conclusion, although it may appear presumptuous on our part, we must express our admiration of the coolness and decision displayed by the Marshal throughout every phase of the action, and we wish to bear our tribute to the gallantry and discipline of the troops under his command.

We have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH McCALMONT, *Captain, 7th Hussars, Military Attaché.*
HENRY TROTTER, *Captain, R.E., Military Attaché.*

Inclosure 3 in No. 380.

Captain McCalmont to Major-General Sir C. Dickson.

Erzeroum, June 28, 1877.

My dear Sir Collingwood,

I HAD intended to write you a long letter, but must make shift with giving you to read a letter to my brother, which please forward by the first mail.

The end of the letter gives you our latest news.

The Turks are fighting grandly. If we could only get large reinforcements from Constantinople we might yet hold our own; but we want good troops, not raw levies. It is impossible to say what the Russian losses have been in recent engagements, as they always carry off their dead; but I fancy it must have been so heavy as to check them for a time. Our own losses in the three recent battles must, I should think, approach one-fourth the total number of our forces, excluding Mustafiz and irregulars. McCalmont and myself start for the front again to-morrow morning. He is sending you unofficially a copy of our somewhat hasty report on the battle of Khali Yári (barren plain). I send you a very hasty and rough sketch of the battle-field, embracing our line of march from Haidukum. I have been bothered with diarrhœa the last few days, and both McCalmont and myself have been hardly up to very much writing since we came in.

A letter received from the front states that our troops were still in possession near Yenikiliuz yesterday morning, the Russians being seven or eight miles to the east. Mukhtar Pasha is said to be at Delibaba without troops, and Ismail Pasha, who went to take charge of Mukhtar's camp when the latter went off to the right, has undoubtedly repulsed the Russians at Zewin. The latter are said to occupy Khorassan, and as the telegraphic line from Zewin runs through Khorassan, we are cut off from telegraphic communication. I believe the direct road from Kuprukui to Zewin is still open. The Russian force operating at Zewin is said to have advanced from Kars by Sara Kunysh, and is estimated at from 10,000 to 12,000 infantry, 24 guns, 2,000 to 4,000 cavalry. No positive news from Bayazid and nothing from Kars. Zohrab reports another Russian force of 25,000 men near Khorassan, but I think it exists only in the imagination of his informers. Sorry I cannot give you something more connected, but everything just now is hurry-scurry and excitement; 3 battalions

infantry and 3 guns were hurried on yesterday from Kuprikui to Zewin, and I daresay we shall be out in time to see some more fighting.

6 P.M. My sa-is has this moment returned with my baggage safe from Zewin. The Russians attacked the Turkish intrenchments there on Monday and were repulsed with heavy loss. Sa-is says Turkish loss was about 80 killed and 360 wounded—not more. He was under fire, but found the road clear. I think this is a *bonâ fide* success for Turks, but whether they will be able to hold their own long against the masses of Russians is another matter. Russians carried off all their dead as usual.

In great haste, believe me, &c.

(Signed) HENRY TROTTER.

N.B.—The sketch I send is the only one extant, so please take care of it. Please put inclosure in a better envelope and forward.

No. 381.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 774.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 13, 1877.

I HAVE just received a letter from Mr. Vice-Consul Sankey, dated the 9th instant. He states that the Russian troops are reported to be marching on Kustendjie, where two Turkish steamers are waiting to carry off the troops and authorities. Ten battalions have been assembled at Medjidieh to resist the advance of the Russians. The Tartars and Circassians have been devastating the country towards Mongolia, to the south of the railway, but some Egyptian troops were sent up from Balchik, who surrounded and disarmed the marauders, and prevented the peasants from running away. He also informs me that a superior officer has arrived at Kustendjie from Varna, with orders to endeavour to discover the authors of any depredations that might be reported.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 382.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 20.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le* 19 *Juillet*, 1877.

UN télégramme de Mouktar Pacha, Commandant-en-chef de l'armée d'Asie, en date du 15 Juillet, nous signale le fait suivant, qui, croyons-nous, n'a pas eu de précédent dans l'histoire militaire d'aucun pays.

A la suite d'un combat livré il y a un mois près du Mont Semvas, dans le voisinage de Kars, les nôtres avaient dû abandonner sur le lieu d'engagement quelques morts et quelques blessés.

Le lendemain, et conformément aux règles et aux usages militaires, Hami Pacha, Commandant de Kars, a envoyé son Aide-de-camp, Osman Effendi, aux avant-postes Russes pour réclamer nos morts et nos blessés; mais, au mépris du drapeau parlementaire dont il était précédé, Osman Effendi et les hommes qui l'accompagnaient ont été accueillis par un feu de mousqueterie; leurs signaux tendant à faire reconnaître leur qualité de parlementaires, d'ailleurs suffisamment affirmée par le drapeau blanc, n'ont eu aucun résultat; le feu des Russes a continué, et Osman Effendi a reçu au bras gauche une blessure qui le retient encore à l'hôpital.

Cet acte inouï n'a pu être signalé à Mouktar Pacha que tout récemment par le Commandant de Kars. On est en droit de se demander si les Russes ont pris à tâche de violer successivement les lois de la guerre, aussi bien que les lois de l'humanité.

No. 383.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 288.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 19, 1877, 10·15 P.M.*

GRAND VIZIER informs me this evening that the Russians are in possession of Kazanlik, and that they will probably move on Philippopolis.

Their forces now on this side of the Balkans are estimated at about 30,000 men.

Shipka Pass is also held by them. The news of the capture of Nicopolis has been received here.

Mehemed Ali Pasha, who has arrived here from Montenegro, will go up to-morrow to take the command of forces in Bulgaria. Assim Pasha, Minister of Justice, goes to Adrianople as High Commissioner, to endeavour to prevent any outburst on the part of the Mussulmans, who are exasperated at the accounts received of cruelties committed by Russians and Bulgarians.

The dispositions of the Russians are made, according to best military authorities here, to march upon Constantinople. The state of affairs is very critical, and I venture to suggest that Her Majesty's Government should lose no time in coming to a decision as to the course to be pursued.

No. 384.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 289.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 20, 1877, 10·10 A.M.*

PORTE has been informed that Austrians are making preparations to enter Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is very anxious to know whether Her Majesty's Government has any information on the subject.

No. 385.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 290.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 20, 1877.*

FOLLOWING telegram just received from Vice-Consul at Philippopolis, dated July 18:—

"Complete panic among Turkish population here this morning, owing to report that Russians have taken Kazanlik and that a body of them are marching here from Carlova. Most of the officials and upwards of 1,000 persons, chiefly Turkish women and children, flocking to railway station with their goods, but Mutessarif put a stop to their departure. Panic has now diminished in consequence of assurance given by Consular Corps to a deputation of leading Turks that Russians would molest no peaceable persons. Situation still rather critical, however, Turkish lower orders being all openly armed, fearing a Bulgarian rising. Austrian, French, and Greek colleagues will presently call in a body on Mutessarif to urge formation of a mixed police force of civilians and disarmament of population at large."

No. 386.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

Bucharest, July 20, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

THE following telegraphed to-day to Belgrade:—

"I do not think Marshall should remain at Widdin; the place will certainly shortly be taken by the Russians, and the effect would be extremely bad were an English officer to be found there under the name of Consular Agent.

"I do not hesitate to say complications, or at all events disagreeable correspondence, might be the result."

Should your Lordship coincide in my views, I beg most respectfully to suggest

that orders be sent to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Belgrade in that sense, and he to send a special messenger to Lieutenant Marshall at Widdin.

No. 387.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 20, 1877, 3·35 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 266, India Office have not heard of the Ameer's intention to send an Envoy to Peshawur, and think Turkish Government has been misinformed.

No. 388.

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General White.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 20, 1877, 5 P.M.*

WITH reference to Colonel Mansfield's telegram of this day, what is Lieutenant Marshall's position at Widdin?

No. 389.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 159. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, July 13, 1877.*

I RECEIVED yesterday, and communicated to M. Tricoupi this afternoon, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, your Lordship's despatch No. 34, Confidential, of the 2nd instant, in answer to the offer of the Hellenic Government to endeavour to prevent outbreaks in the neighbouring provinces, upon condition of obtaining a promise from Great Britain to consider that there was nevertheless an Hellenic question before Europe when the time came for settling the other questions arising out of the present war between Russia and Turkey.

M. Tricoupi asked me beforehand whether I should be able to leave a copy of the despatch with him; but as it was marked Confidential, I told him that I could not do so without your Lordship's permission, and that I could only read it to him confidentially.

It turned out, however, that he had already received a pretty accurate description of it by telegraph from Mr. Gennadius, to whom your Lordship appears to have given or sent a memoir of its contents, and who has no doubt since forwarded a copy of the memoir itself by post, for the official use of the Hellenic Government, although it had not yet arrived.

The first observation which M. Tricoupi made, after I had read the despatch to him, related to your Lordship's assurance that Her Majesty's Government would "be ready to use their best influence to secure for the Greek population in the Turkish provinces any administrative reforms or advantages which may be conferred upon the Christian population of any other race." He wished to know whether the word "advantages" was to be taken separately or in connection with the word "administrative," which was applied to the reforms, as in the former case it might include independence or semi-independence, or any other privileges which might be conceded to one or more of the Slavonic provinces of Turkey.

Upon examining the sentence, I was obliged to give it as my opinion—there being no comma after the word "reforms"—that administrative advantages were alone intended. Such was also the safest construction to put upon your Lordship's meaning.

With regard to your Lordship's remark that it was not clear from M. Tricoupi's statement, as it had been reported by me, what his precise meaning was, he admitted that he had been intentionally and from necessity somewhat obscure or vague in his statement to me.

He had evidently felt that it would be improper for him, and distasteful to Her Majesty's Government, to define the Hellenic question in its fullest and most ambi-

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tious sense, and yet that it would not do for him to give a more limited definition of it. It had, therefore, been left to Her Majesty's Government to take as comprehensive a view of the question as circumstances might permit.

From what he has more than once said to me, his wishes lead him to believe that it would not be difficult to persuade the Porte, as the most advantageous step which it could take in its own interest, to cede Thessaly and Epirus to Greece, and thereby to secure the friendship and co-operation of the Greeks, instead of being always exposed to insurrectionary movements on their part. He has assured me that at or about the time of the cession of the Ionian Islands, Her Majesty's Government, in which were Viscount Palmerston and Earl Russell, had been prepared to give advice in that sense to the Porte, and he considers that such advice might more easily be given now, and with a better chance of being favourably received.

Whenever M. Tricoupi has so spoken to me, I have answered that any person who had lived at Constantinople, or who was acquainted with the Turkish character, must know that it would be next to an impossibility to persuade the Porte to make any voluntary cession of territory, unless after some serious defeat, however much it might be conducive to the real welfare of Turkey to do so; and I have not thought it worth while to make any separate report of such a suggestion to your Lordship.

When I asked M. Tricoupi what I might say to your Lordship respecting the intentions of the Hellenic Government in connection with the sentence in your despatch counselling the maintenance of a prudent attitude, he replied that the Government had not yet decided what course it would be necessary for them to pursue, but that they had no intention of raising insurrectionary movements in the Turkish provinces, and they had every desire to continue to act with moderation and prudence.

He proceeded to tell me that if the provinces in question wished to rise, it would be a serious responsibility for the Hellenic Government to endeavour to prevent them without being in a position to guarantee to them the same advantages which they might obtain by insurrection.

I did not fail to remind M. Tricoupi that it would be a still greater responsibility to give any encouragement to the provinces to rise; that massacres and much bloodshed and devastation would be a certain consequence of insurrection; and that, in the event of failure, the Hellenic populations would be left in a much worse state than before, whilst by trusting to peaceful means they would, sooner or later, obtain all that they could reasonably claim.

Although your Lordship's despatch did not promise so much as M. Tricoupi would naturally have desired, he expressed himself as being much gratified by the assurances which Her Majesty's Government had felt at liberty to give with respect to the Greek populations, as well as by the continued friendly interest evinced in the welfare of Greece; and he assured me of the continued desire of the Hellenic Government and people to conciliate the good-will and sympathy of Great Britain.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 300.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 214. Political. Confidential.)

Alexandria, July 14, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Khedive informs me that he finds himself compelled to send another regiment of cavalry (about 700 men) to Turkey.

It seems that the Sultan, when he received Prince Hassan so graciously on his arrival at Constantinople with the Egyptian contingent, while expressing his satisfaction at the assistance thus sent, said in a very marked way that he knew more troops had been prepared; to which the Prince replied that it was true that a regiment of cavalry was in readiness, but that there had been no room for them in the transports.

The Khedive has taken this hint as an order, and intends to send the troops at once in fast transports of his own, without demanding an escort from the Porte, running the risk of their being intercepted by the Russians.

It is more than probable, if the war continues, that this will not be the last demand of the Porte for further assistance from Egypt.

The Khedive also informs me that he has received a telegram from Tahat Pasha, his Agent at Constantinople, stating that the Prince of Montenegro is making overtures to the Porte for the conclusion of peace through the mediation of Her Majesty's Consul at Cettigné.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 301.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 275. Very Confidential.)

Siena, July 14, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH my Austro-Hungarian colleague, who has been staying a couple of days with us here, I have had some further conversation relative to the extraordinary proposal which the Italian Government made to the Cabinet of Vienna, as reported in my despatch No. 267, Very Confidential, of the 2nd instant, that the two Governments should intercede at Constantinople in favour of Montenegro.

This step on the part of the Italian Government has evidently again aroused the susceptibilities of the Austro-Hungarian Government, and reawakened their suspicions respecting Italian policy, which had, to a certain extent, been set at rest, in consequence of the disavowals of the Italian Government last winter as to their having any intention of raising any pretensions to the Trentino.

The persuasion of the Austro-Hungarian Government now is that the Italian Government only put forward the idea of intervening for Montenegro in the hope that it might eventually lead to Italy getting a footing in Albania. Now this, Baron Haymerle says, his Government is determined she shall not do. She has got the whole of one side of the Adriatic, he observed, let her be content with that.

I told Baron Haymerle that, in one of my conversations with Signor Melegari about the Mirdite insurrection (reported to your Lordship at the time), I had mentioned to his Excellency the report that it was fomented by Italian agents; that his Excellency had been indignant at the accusation, and had said that he would at all events prove that the Italian Government gave no countenance to any such intrigues, by sending orders to all Italian ports in the Adriatic to prevent the departure of any expeditions for the Coast of Albania, and moreover, by having an Italian ship on the Coast of Albania, to intercept any such expedition "in the improbable event" of one leaving the shores of Italy.

Baron Haymerle replied that the frequent presence of an Italian ship on the Albanian Coast was just one of the things which had attracted the attention of his own Government and of that of the Sultan. Let the Italian Government keep watch on their own coast, and leave the Turkish Government to protect theirs.

His Excellency added that his own opinion was that the Italian Government was more blameable in appearance than in reality; but why, if they had no ambitious designs, did they do things which could not fail to cast suspicion upon their intentions? They had no business, Baron Haymerle continued, even to entertain any jealousy of an Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for they knew perfectly well that it would only take place if it could not be avoided. The idea that it could be a menace to Italy was too absurd to speak about.

His Excellency made some further observations, in which there is no doubt a good deal of truth. He said the Italians lived in a state of feverish excitement lest any one should forget for an instant that Italy ranks as one of the great Powers. The present Ministry was afraid of appearing not to uphold that position to the same extent as their predecessors, and of being taunted by their political friends and opponents, and by the press, for not playing a sufficiently important part in the affairs of Europe. A wise Government should give no heed to such considerations. If Italy would only be satisfied with doing nothing, with remaining perfectly tranquil, she would have an admirable position, and, while she gained the esteem of all Powers, she might be quite sure that due weight would be given to her voice when the arrangements at the conclusion of the war came to be discussed.

I told Baron Haymerle what had frequently been said to me by M. Melegari, and repeated by him and also by M. Depretis in an interview I had with them when I was last in Rome, as to the objections of the Italian Government to a Russian occupation of Constantinople, and to any change in the existing regulations for the navigation of the Straits, &c., as reported in my despatch No. 265, Confidential, of the 30th ultimo,

to which Baron Haymerle replied that it was part of the Italian system always to say what was likely to be agreeable to those to whom they were speaking. He had no doubt the Italian Government had taken credit to themselves with Russia for their step in favour of Montenegro.

I replied that, about the latter point I could, of course, say nothing, but I was under no illusions as to Italian character and the reliance to be placed upon it. I had not been ten days resident in Italy without finding out that the Italians were a people who, if I might make use of the expression, "liked their bread buttered on both sides," but that, nevertheless, when they expressed themselves averse to Constantinople falling into the hands of Russia, and to the opening of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus to ships of war in time of peace, they might, I thought, be credited with sincerity, because the interests of Italy, as one of the naval Powers in the Mediterranean, were evidently opposed to the accomplishment of the results above-mentioned.

Baron Haymerle fully admitted this.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 392.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 277. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Siena, July 14, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 236, Confidential, of the 28th ultimo, inclosing a copy of a despatch (No. 614, Confidential, of 15th June) from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to a report that a branch of the Panslavist Committee of St. Petersburgh has been established at Venice, under the direction of M. Aksakou and Baron Uxhüll, the Russian Ambassador at this Court, and that representations upon the subject are said to have been made to the Italian Government on the part of the Austrian and Turkish Representatives in Rome, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I took an opportunity of making some inquiries on this subject of Baron Haymerle during the recent visit he has paid us here.

His Excellency informed me that he had no knowledge whatever of the existence of any Panslavist Committee at Venice, and he did not believe that there was one.

There was no doubt, however, his Excellency said, that arms and munitions of war, destined for the Montenegrins, did come to Venice, principally, he believed, from Brescia and other places in Germany, whither the Montenegrin Minister of War and a certain M. Ramadavovitch went some months ago for the purpose of giving the necessary orders. These arms, &c., were sent quite openly, and remained in deposit in the Custom-house of Venice, "a porto franco," and it was the business of M. Ramadavovitch, who was now established in Venice, to find means for forwarding them to their destination. This he generally did by having them conveyed, in the first instance, to Corfu, a neutral port, by which means he evaded any interference on the part of the Italian authorities.

Baron Haymerle informed me of two cases in which Austrian ships had been engaged.

The first was a coasting vessel, the captain of which came to the Austro-Hungarian Consul, and asked him to sign his papers for Corfu. Upon the Consul pointing out to him that as he was engaged in the coasting trade he could not sign his papers for a foreign port, the captain replied that, in point of fact, he was going to carry a cargo to a particular spot on the coast of Albania, but the cargo was of such a nature that the Custom-house authorities would not let him clear with it to the coast of Albania, and he therefore wished his papers signed for Corfu. Needless to say, added Baron Haymerle, that the Consul declined to be a party to any such transaction, and was approved by his Government for refusing.

The other Austrian vessel had a cargo for Corfu, but took on board besides 6 cannons and 300 cases of ammunition, which his Excellency said were seized by the Austrian authorities at Cattaro.

Baron Haymerle added that he had never made any representation to the Italian Government relative to the export of arms and munitions from Venice for the use of the Montenegrins, but the subject having been alluded to in conversation with

M. Melegari, his Excellency had stated that the Government had no power to interfere when the arms, &c., were addressed to a neutral port.

The same answer, Baron Haymerle said, he believed, had been given to the Turkish Minister, who had made an official representation on the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 393.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 280.)
My Lord, *Siena, July 18, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith an extract from the "Italie" of this date, which has almost the appearance of an official communication, stating that there is and can be no foundation for the rumour that Italy will occupy Antivari if England occupies Gallipoli.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Inclosure in No. 393.

Extract from the "Italie" of July 18, 1877.

DERNIÈRES NOUVELLES.—Divers journaux étrangers, entre autres la "Revue de Lundi" de Vienne, annoncent que l'Italie occupera Antivari si l'Angleterre occupe Gallipoli.

Nous pouvons déclarer que cette nouvelle n'a et ne peut avoir aucun fondement.

No. 394.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 600.)
My Lord, *Vienna, July 18, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 590 of the 12th instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith the copy of a Report which I received to-day from Mr. Vice-Consul Cooper from a watering place in Croatia, where he went to communicate with General Molinari on his way to Serajevo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 394.

Mr. Cooper to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir, *Topusko Bad, Croatia, July 10, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that this morning I saw General Mollinari, commanding the military frontier.

From his conversation he evidently thinks that Bosnia is in a very disturbed state. Government has almost passed from the hands of the Sultan's officials, and the Begs do what they like.

There are numerous bands wandering about, who commit depredations of various kinds. These bands, originally composed entirely of Christians, now number many Mahommedans among their ranks. The Begs (landed proprietors) have taken advantage of the crisis in the affairs of Turkey to increase their own revenues, and now squeeze everything they can from their tenants, Christians and Mahommedans alike. The reduced state of the army prevents the central Government maintaining order. Of the army lately employed in Montenegro, forty-nine battalions have or are on the eve of departure for the East. The remaining twenty-six battalions are to be distributed between Albania and Herzegovina. In addition to this force, the Turks

still have some regular troops in Bosnia. They are chiefly in Serajevo, at Travanik, Banjaluka, and along the Servian frontier.

The Austrian authorities compute the number of fugitives still in Austria as between 50,000 and 54,000. The men are employed in field-work, and women and children, and others unable to work, are allowed 10 kr. a-day by the Government.

There does not seem to be any particular district in Bosnia to which the disorders are confined. Wherever the regular troops appear, the insurgents, or rather wanderers, disperse and take refuge in the hills and woods.

The Austrian post-cart between Brood and Serajevo was stopped the other day, but no damage appears to have been done. On the other hand, whenever the Government at Serajevo wishes to pass a messenger or courier, it is still strong enough to furnish the necessary escort, and an Austrian was escorted a short time ago from Novi to Travanik.

General Molinari has most kindly given orders to the frontier officers to give me every information and facilitate my journey.

To-morrow I propose visiting Vostajnica and, if time will allow, Novi; afterwards, I shall work down to Brood and so on to Serajevo, which I hope to reach about this day week.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HARRY COOPER.

No. 395.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *July* 19, 1877.
(Secret.)

RUSSIAN troops hold pass of Balkans, eastward of Kazanlik; 12th and 13th Corps advance on River Lom, on other side of which Turks are in force, and battle is expected.

My conviction is that Russians intend to occupy Constantinople, and that English occupation would be regarded as a declaration of war. This is only my private opinion.

No. 396.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, July* 21, 1877.
(Most Confidential.)

GENERAL IGNATIEW told a person of whose veracity I am certain, but whose name I am not at liberty to mention, that the Pasha commanding at Rustchuk has been bought, and that the place will fall after the semblance of a few days' resistance. The question is how much veracity attaches to any statement of General Ignatiew?

No. 397.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

Belgrade, July 20, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

MARSHALL'S position is a temporary one at Widdin. He is British Vice-Consul in Servia. Sent to Widdin, where there is no English Consul, but an Austrian one on special service.

No. 398.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, July* 21, 1877.

WITH reference to my telegram of last night, I may state that both Nisch and Widdin were included in this Consular district in the time of my predecessor, Mr. Longworth.

No. 399.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, July* 21, 1877, *noon.*

COLONEL MANSFIELD'S telegram reached me after I had sent my two last ones to your Lordship. I gave Marshall written instructions, copy of which I send by this messenger. Your Lordship will see from them that I distinctly cautioned him to avoid being shut up in case of an investment. I trust to his discretion to leave Widdin in time, unless your Lordship wishes him to be recalled at once.

No 400.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, July* 21, 1877.

A DESPATCH from her Majesty's Consul at Ragusa, just received, states that military preparations of every kind are being made in Dalmatia; munitions of war or provisions are being landed by every steamer, and the military stations are being fortified; the troops have been ordered to be ready for active service, and 800 mules have been collected between Ragusa and Klek.

No. 401.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(Telegraphic) *Vienna, July* 21, 1877.

WITH reference to the copy of a letter from Colonel Stokes, inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 248 of the 28th, and to my despatch No. 602 of the 19th instant, I beg to explain that M. Orczy, in stating to me that the Government here are of opinion that the deepened bed of the Sulina branch of the Danube should be held to form part of the neutralized works of the Commission, took the same view as Colonel Stokes as to waters of Channel having no claim to neutrality.

No. 402.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, July* 21, 1877.

WITH reference to the question of the Porte, Military Attaché knows of no further additions being made to the Austrian forces on the frontier than those mentioned in his report inclosed in my despatch No. 551 of the 8th ultimo, and he is of opinion that no occupation of Turkish territory will take place without the mobilization of a part of the army. All other preparations for every possible eventuality have been long since made.

I do not pretend to know when Government may consider it necessary to take measures for the protection of their interests, but "material guarantees," referred to in Count Andrassy's despatch to Count Beust of the 22nd ultimo, taken with the context, can, it appears to me, only mean an occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

No. 403.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, July 21, 1877.*

SINCE communication by Russian Ambassador in London of the Russian answer to my note of the 21st June, on Russian advance towards Merve, second report has been received here announcing General Lomakin's return to his head-quarters.

Death of Ameer of Kashgar officially confirmed. He died at Kourle after thirteen days' illness, appointing a certain Hakim his successor. He, however, gave up succession to eldest son of Ameer, who has officially announced to General Kaufmann death of his father, and his succession with approval of nation.

No. 404.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 291.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 21, 1877, 11·30 A.M.*

PORTE has been informed from Athens that the Hellenic Government is preparing for immediate hostilities against Turkey. This is confirmed by the language held to me last night by the Greek Minister, and I am led to believe that an occasion for quarrel with Turkey will be found at once. (Sent to Athens.)

No. 405.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 358.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 21, 1877, 5·10 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram of 19th instant, Consul at Taganrog telegraphs that several Greek vessels which remained there after the prescribed term have loaded cargo and proceeded into the Black Sea, and that two or three vessels with cargo under the Greek flag have arrived at Taganrog from Constantinople, the latest only a few days ago.

Inform Porte of this, and state that English merchants complain of being placed at a disadvantage.

No. 406.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 359.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 21, 1877, 5·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 289, Sir A. Buchanan telegraphs as follows:—

"With reference to question of the Porte, Military Attaché knows of no further additions being made to the Austrian forces on the frontier than those mentioned in his report inclosed in my despatch No. 551 of the 8th ultimo, and he is of opinion that no occupation of Turkish territory will take place without the mobilization of a part of the army. All other preparations for every possible eventuality have been long since made."

We have no knowledge here that Austria is about to enter Bosnia and Herzegovina, but cannot answer for eventualities.

No. 407.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 3. Political.)
My Lord, *Ragusa, July 12, 1877.*

THREE weeks have now elapsed since Suleiman Pasha, with a loss of 1,500 men, marched through Montenegro and effected a junction with Ali Saib Pasha at Spuz, and yet no signs are being given of a resumption of hostilities.

The general opinion here is that the Turks begin to see the futility of continuing a struggle in which there is nothing to be gained, and that the troops will shortly be sent towards the Danubian provinces.

Much as the generalship of Suleiman Pasha has been praised by the military authorities at Ragusa, that of his colleague on the Albanian frontier has been condemned.

General Poppenheim, commanding the Austrian troops in southern Dalmatia, states it as his opinion that Ali Saib Pasha, instead of attacking the Montenegrins under Petrovitch, whereby he suffered a severe defeat, and lost 4,000 or 5,000 men, should have hastened to join Suleiman Pasha, whose troops during the last forty-eight hours had suffered much for want of provisions.

Those who know Montenegro well assert that a march to Cettinjé would be quite impracticable, and that such an attempt, if successful, which is doubtful, would be attended with a loss of at least two-thirds of the invading army, as the road, or rather pass, leading to it might easily be defended by a few hundred men.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Turkish Generals, knowing the difficulties they would have to encounter, and the little glory that would result from such an achievement, are in no hurry to undertake the expedition without positive instructions to do so.

I avail myself of this opportunity to report that the Russian and Austrian Agents are still with the Prince of Montenegro, and that my Turkish colleague, Danish Effendi, has just left for Scutari—it is said on important business.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 408.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 66. Political.)
My Lord, *Galatz, July 16, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 65, Political, of the 10th instant, I have the honour to report that the bridge materials ordered at Galatz by the Roumanian authorities are now ready, but there appears to be some difficulty about the anchors, the contractor for these being unwilling to part with them on credit.

I am informed that a contract has been entered into by the Russian Government for a railway from Bender to Reni and Galatz (Ismail was first mentioned, but apparently in error). The surveys on the Russian side are completed as far as the frontier, and those on the Roumanian side are now being made from Bolgrad.

Troops are said to be passing daily by rail from Roman, and the 10th Army Corps is reported to be on its way here, and likely to arrive in two or three days, but latterly there has always been an expectation of the arrival of a large body of troops, apparently without the slightest foundation. None have arrived either here or at Ibraila since my despatch of the 10th instant above alluded to.

Two guns of heavy calibre have been withdrawn from Reni and sent forward, as well as several of those formerly in position at Ibraila.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

No. 409.

Lieutenant-Colonel Siborne to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 22.)
My Lord, *Galatz, July 16, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge having received yesterday your Lordship's despatch No. 5 of the 18th ultimo, repeating your Lordship's telegram of that date, which reached me the same night, and which informed me of the decision of the Porte respecting the use of the Danube Commission flag.

I may now mention that the Turks appear to act in accordance with that decision

as one of our steam pilot boats proceeds regularly to Kustendjie or Varna for the conveyance of the mails to and from Sulina.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. SIBORNE, *Lieutenant-Colonel, R.E.,*
British Commissioner on the Danube.

No. 410.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 601. Confidential.) *Vienna, July* 19, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 522 of the 18th ultimo, relative to the objection of the Porte to coals destined for Roumania being carried past Adakaleh, I have been confidentially informed by Baron Orczy that the Porte have been induced by Count Zichy to permit the conveyance by the Danube of coals from Austria-Hungary to Roumania to be resumed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 411.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 602. Confidential.) *Vienna, July* 19, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 555 of the 11th instant, relative to the sinking by the Russian military authorities of barges filled with stones on the Sulina branch of the Danube, I have now been informed confidentially by Baron Orczy that the Austro-Hungarian Government are of opinion that the deepened bed of the river forms a part of the neutralized works of the Danube Commission, and that the note of which I inclose a copy, and which has probably been already communicated to your Lordship by Count Beust, has been consequently addressed to M. de Novikow, the Russian Ambassador here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 411.

Baron Orczy to M. de Novikow.

Vienne, le 15 *Juillet,* 1877.

ON nous mande de Galatz que les autorités militaires Russes sont sur le point de barrer le passage du Canal de Soulina par l'immersion des barques chargées de pierres. La Commission Européenne du Danube, en portant ce fait à la connaissance des Cabinets intéressés, vient d'appeler leur attention sur les conséquences dangereuses de cette opération. Non seulement toute communication dans cette partie du fleuve serait interrompue, mais on risque encore d'abîmer, par cette immersion, la partie la plus importante des travaux créés par la Commission Internationale, de compromettre les plus beaux résultats du travail de longues années de la dite Commission et d'exposer à des pertes irréparables, tant la navigation interceptée par ce barrage que le grand capital contribué par toutes les Puissances pour déblayer le canal en question. Sous ces circonstances la Commission Européenne se croit obligée de réclamer aujourd'hui en sa faveur et pour prémunir ses travaux des dangers exposés et imminents, les droits de neutralité qui lui sont garantis par les Traités. Le Gouvernement Impérial de Russie a bien voulu, récemment encore et à l'ouverture même de la guerre actuelle, reconnaître ces droits proclamés notamment par le Traité de Londres de 1871, qui protégent les établissements et les ouvrages créés par la Commission Internationale Européenne.

Je ne sais pas si les faits signalés par notre Délégué à la Commission Européenne

sont exacts ou non. Toutefois, en portant ce qui précède à votre connaissance, M. l'Ambassadeur, je vous prie de vouloir bien communiquer, aussitôt que possible, la demande de la Commission Européenne à son Altesse Impériale le Commandant-en-chef des troupes Impériales en Roumanie. Les mesures signalées auxquelles la Commission Européenne se croit obligée de s'opposer, sont de nature à pouvoir léser sensiblement les intérêts de tous les Gouvernements engagés dans cette question, en compromettant, non seulement les capitaux employés pour cette entreprise, mais en constituant ainsi, en même temps, des dommages intérêts très considérables qui seront réclamés par le commerce et la navigation de tout le monde. Il ne peut pas être dans l'intérêt du Gouvernement de Russie de provoquer ainsi des réclamations générales de cette nature à cause des mesures dont l'effet, s'il est nécessaire, pourra certainement être obtenu aussi par d'autres dispositions.

Je saisis cette occasion, &c.

No. 412.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 292.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 21, 1877, 11·45 A.M.

FOLLOWING figures from Consul Green :—

"Montenegro will probably, under the advice of the Russian Consul, bombard most Turkish positions on the northern and southern frontiers, but with no hope of doing any injury, the guns being of small calibre.

"A Council of War was to have been held at Orialuka on the 16th, but was put off on account of illness of the Russian Consul. Both the Austrian Agent and the "Times" Correspondent told me that Montenegro had consented to act thus far to secure Russian subventions, and is fully aware that it cannot undertake serious offensive operations. Prince said he was also being urged to make a demonstration in the direction of Kolaschin to help Servia. I hear that the fire on Nichsich has already commenced."

No. 413.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 293.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 21, 1877, *noon.*

I HAVE seen a highly-respectable Armenian who arrived here last night from Kazanlik. He confirms the statements of atrocities committed upon the Mussulman populations by the Bulgarians, under the protection and at the instigation of Russians. The chief leader in them, he says, is Hadji Dimitri, a merchant of Dranova. Many most flourishing villages have been burnt, women violated, and children put to death in a most horrible way, the Cossacks having first disarmed the inhabitants and then given them over to the Bulgarians for slaughter. I send home by next messenger evidence taken by Mr. Blunt from fugitives which confirms these statements.

No. 414.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 294.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 21, 1877, 5·30 P.M.

A DECLARATION has been signed by above twenty correspondents of leading European newspapers at Shumla, including the "Times," testifying to outrages committed upon inoffensive Mussulmans, especially women and children, by Russian troops and Bulgarians. It is to be transmitted to England and elsewhere.

No. 415.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 295.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 21, 1877, 10 P.M.*

PORTE has received intelligence that Osman Pasha was attacked on the 19th and 20th at Plevna, and after two days' hard fighting repulsed the enemy with great loss, capturing three caissons and a large quantity of arms.

No. 416.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 296.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 22, 1877, 4·15 P.M.*

I UNDERSTAND from a telegram from Mr. Blunt, dated yesterday, that the Turks have been obliged to abandon the Shipka Pass.

No. 417.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 297.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 22, 1877, 5·30 P.M.*

TELEGRAMS received from Adrianople and Philippopolis most contradictory as to number of Russians who have crossed Balkans.

Consul Blunt says Turkish authorities place it at 30,000; Vice-Consul Dupuis at 8,000 Russians, accompanied by 10,000 armed Bulgarians.

Captain Fife states that Governor of Adrianople places it at about 1,000 Russians, with mountain guns, and some thousand Bulgarians. According to last accounts that I have received, the Russians had occupied Kalofer on the road to Philippopolis.

No. 418.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 23.)

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Constantinople, le 11 Juillet, 1877.*

VOTRE Excellence trouvera, ci-jointe, la traduction d'une lettre adressée à la Sublime Porte par les Députés Musulmans de l'Assemblée Générale de Crète et par laquelle ils réfutent les assertions contenues dans un Rapport de Mr. Barker, ex-Gérant du Consulat Britannique à la Canée, et qui a paru dans le "Blue Book" Anglais.

Je prie votre Excellence de vouloir bien faire de cette pièce tel usage qu'elle jugera convenable, et d'agréer, &c.

(Signé) SAFVET.

Inclosure in No. 418.

Letter addressed to the Sublime Porte by the Mussulman Deputies of the General Assembly of Crete.

(Traduction.)

C'EST avec surprise que nous avons lu dans le No. 829 du journal "Clio," publié à Trieste, la reproduction d'une lettre officielle du Livre Bleu Anglais, portant la date du 5 Février, 1877, adressée à Lord Derby par Mr. Barker, ex-Gérant du Consulat Britannique en Crète, qui se trouve actuellement en la même qualité à Salonique.

En jetant un coup d'œil sur cette lettre, chacun pourra observer que Mr. Barker est dans une complète ignorance de l'état et de la statistique du pays. Comme cette lettre a été publiée dans un livre officiel, tel que le Livre Bleu Anglais, qui jouit de l'estime des hommes politiques, et qu'on y trouve une foule de calomnies à faire rougir, nous nous voyons dans la nécessité de les réfuter et de les démentir point par point.

(*a.*) "Il n'y a aucun espoir que la Loi Organique soit un bienfait pour l'Ile de Crète."

Cette loi, établie pour l'amélioration du sort de tous les habitants en général, qui l'ont acceptée avec satisfaction, et qui en ont bénéficié jusqu'à l'année dernière, ne laisse aucun doute qu'elle ne soit aussi à l'avenir un bienfait pour l'île, si les habitants Chrétiens y mettent de la bonne volonté et du dévouement.

(*b.*) "Les Chrétiens regardent d'un œil fixe la Grèce, admirent ses institutions libérales, espèrent en l'avenir et croient qu'aussi longtemps qu'ils seront sous la domination Ottomane, aucun progrès ne pourra se faire."

Puisque les habitants Chrétiens jouissent, indépendamment de toutes sortes de droits politiques et civiques, de grandes exemptions fiscales, il dépend d'eux de faire des progrès. Au lieu de tourner leurs regards vers la Grèce, il vaudrait mieux ne point se laisser entraîner par des menées perfides, mais rechercher les moyens de progrès.

(*c.*) "Vivre sans espoir est un état désespéré de l'existence. Voilà le motif pour lequel les Chrétiens se montrent toujours prêts à prendre les armes."

Quelle autre raison peut pousser les Chrétiens de Crète à prendre les armes si ce n'est les intrigues et les agissements des étrangers? Les événements passés suffisent pour démontrer ce fait.

(*d.*) "D'autre part, on est étonné et avec raison, de voir que la Porte s'efforce avec tant de fermeté de conserver l'occupation de l'île, qui sera toujours une source de dépenses colossales, et dont il n'y a aucun espoir de revenus."

Ce passage de la lettre est d'autant plus sérieux qu'une telle opinion de la part d'un Consul est tout-à-fait absurde et dépasse ses attributions. Elle est non-seulement contraire aux droits sacrés de souveraineté de la Sublime Porte, mais encore diamétralement opposée à l'esprit du Traité de 1856, obtenu au prix d'énormes sacrifices, et à la conservation duquel le Gouvernement Britannique attache un si haut prix.

(*e.*) "Les 40,000 ou 50,000 Musulmans en Crète pourraient très bien être protégés par un Traité. D'ailleurs, si la Crète venait à changer de maître, la majorité de ces Mahométans deviendrait Chrétienne."

La statistique démontre que le nombre des Musulmans en Crète s'élève à plus de 100,000. En outre, les terres et les fermes de grande valeur, les capitaux employés au commerce de terre et de mer, et presque tous les bâtiments de commerce appartiennent aux Musulmans. Leurs droits et leurs intérêts dans le pays sont donc plus solides que ceux des Chrétiens. Les 40,000 ou 50,000 Musulmans qu'on croirait pouvoir protéger par un Traité et dont on considère la majorité comme devant éventuellement changer de religion, ne sont ni faibles ni lâches; ils sont prêts à verser jusqu'à la dernière goutte de leur sang pour sauvegarder leurs droits légitimes et leur religion, qui, pour eux, demeure la plus sacrée et la plus vénérée des choses.

(*f.*) "Les Musulmans de Crète parlent tous le Grec, aucun parmi eux ne connaît un mot de Turc."

Au chef-lieu du Gouvernement-Général et des sous-Gouvernements, il a existé de tout temps des établissements d'instruction pour l'enseignement des langues Arabe, Persane, et Turque, comme pour l'étude de la religion et des sciences. Les professeurs sont tous indigènes (Mr. Barker, qui a assisté aux examens de l'école supérieure de la Canée l'a constaté de visu). Dans les chefs-lieux des provinces et dans les villages qui en dépendent, il existe aussi depuis bien longtemps des écoles pour l'étude de la théologie et de la langue Turque; on a formé en outre des commissions d'instruction publique dans le but de propager parmi les habitants Musulmans la connaissance des lettres Islamiques. Tous les employés Musulmans du Gouvernement-Général sont indigènes et tous écrivent leur langue nationale.

(*g.*) "Aussi, la religion de la plupart vise des avantages politiques plutôt qu'elle ne tient à des convictions de conscience."

La stabilité religieuse et la bonne conscience des Musulmans de l'île sont incontestables. Leur dévouement et leur persévérance en matière de devoirs religieux et nationaux sont connus tant de leurs amis que de leurs ennemis, et constatés par des faits successifs. Ils sont toujours prêts à sacrifier pour leur religion leurs intérêts personnels et politiques.

En résumé, nous nous autorisons à croire que, si Mr. Barker a osé envoyer aveuglement une lettre si opposée à la vérité et à l'évidence, c'est qu'il s'est laissé tromper par les mensonges et les duperies d'un employé Hellène connu, qui est attaché depuis quelque temps au Consulat Britannique en Crète; car Mr. Barker, qui n'a demeuré ici que quatre ou cinq mois, sans qu'il se soit rendu dans cet intervalle nulle

autre part que dans deux ou trois jardins, n'a point été en relation avec les habitants Musulmans, ce qui prouve que non-seulement il n'a pu étudier leur croyance, leurs mœurs et leurs usages, mais aussi qu'il n'a su distinguer leur caractère.

En conséquence, au nom de tous les habitants Musulmans de Crète, nous réfutons et démentons la lettre en question, qui ne contient, comme cela a été prouvé par les réponses ci-dessus, que mensonges et calomnies. Nous prions votre Altesse de vouloir bien, si elle le juge opportun, faire en sorte qu'avis soit donné de ce qui précède à Lord Derby, d'une manière convenable.

(Suivent les sceaux.)

Le 27 Djémazi-ul-oula, 1294 (29 *Mai*, 1877.)

No. 419.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 23.)

(No. 384.) {*St. Petersburgh, July* 14, 1877.

My Lord,

IT is reported that the Russian Government has given to M. Poliakow, the great contractor for South Russian railways, the concession for a line from Bender to Galatz, 250 versts in length, and for the price of about 128,000 roubles a verst. The line is to be finished and opened for traffic within three months.

This line will greatly facilitate the provisioning of the Russian army in Bulgaria, and will be of strategic value in many respects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 420.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 25.)

(No. 4. Political.) *Ragusa, July* 14, 1877.

My Lord,

INTELLIGENCE has been received here that to-morrow, the 15th, a meeting of Montenegrin and Herzegovinian Chiefs is to take place at Planinitza, near Ostrog, to deliberate on their future plans.

It is evident now that the Montenegrins, profiting by the absence of Suleiman Pasha, have been inciting the Herzegovinians and engaging them to co-operate with a view, it is reported, to an attack on Nichsich.

Information has also been received at Ragusa that Suleiman Pasha, with 30 battalions, is about to leave for Constantinople, as Turkish troops have been seen marching in the direction of Antivari on the sea-coast.

The sudden departure of my Turkish colleague for Albania, as I announced in my despatch of the 12th instant, leads me to believe that there is some foundation for such a report, as he has been called by Suleiman Pasha probably to facilitate the transport of troops by sea.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 421.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 23.)

(No. 291. Secret.) *Berlin, July* 20, 1877.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 285, Secret, of the 14th instant, I stated that the understanding between Count Andrassy, Prince Bismarck, and Prince Gortchakow had become more intimate since the Russian army had crossed the Danube, and that they were now determined to insist on a lasting solution of the Oriental question, which I took to mean the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire in Europe.

From your Lordship's despatch No. 246, Confidential, of the 16th instant, to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna, I see that Count Beust has been authorized to inform

your Lordship officially that no engagement exists between Austria and Russia other than that which results from the despatches and telegrams already communicated to Her Majesty's Government, and that no secret understanding or engagement of any kind exists between the two Governments.

At first sight Count Beust's official declaration and my report would appear to be in contradiction to each other if his Excellency had not qualified his statement by explaining that the Austrian Government have accepted certain assurances given by Russia, and consider themselves pledged to treat those assurances as sincere unless evidence should appear to the contrary.

Now it is the renewal of those assurances and pledges since the Russian army has crossed the Danube which has made the understanding between Austria and Russia, to which Germany is a party, even more intimate than before. Russia promises Austria, in return for her neutrality, and by way of compensation for the establishment of Bulgarian autonomy, a considerable increase of territory in Turkey. Germany secures, by her moral support, the continued alliance of Russia against France, and Russia obtains leave to establish her influence over the Slav populations of Turkey, and to annex certain portions of Bessarabia and Armenia unmolested and unopposed by Austria and Germany.

This understanding between the Northern Powers is no longer a secret one, as Count Beust is officially authorized to declare, since it results from the despatches and telegrams already communicated to Her Majesty's Government, but it results also from this understanding and its consequences that when the Sultan is no longer Sovereign or Suzerain of Bulgaria, Roumania, Servia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, that the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire in Europe cannot be far distant.

Sir Andrew Buchanan, in his despatch No. 573, Secret, of the 7th instant, states that the Emperor of Austria, while regretting the advantages Russia must gain, finds consolation in the hope that the arrangements made will have a permanent character, and that Austria may find them more advantageous than a mere patching-up or "replâtrage" of the relations between the Porte and its subjects.

The advantage of annexing Turkish territory to Austria is, perhaps, a doubtful one; but, according to Prince Bismarck's advice to Count Andrassy, more advantageous after all than a quarrel with Russia, unless, indeed, evidence should appear that her promises are not sincere, in which case, but not before, the support of England would become invaluable to Austria.

For these reasons the language of Count Andrassy to Her Majesty's Government must remain vague, as if inclined to make common cause with England without committing himself to any precise declaration so long as Russia is faithful to her promise to promote the interests of Austria.

The Northern Allies having failed to obtain the co-operation of Her Majesty's Government in carrying out the "efficacious measures" foreshadowed from the beginning, are fully aware of the danger to their plans of an English intervention while they are themselves carrying them into effect, and therefore seek to encourage the prolongation of English neutrality by vague and general offers of future support until the war is over, when they flatter themselves they can safely invite the Guaranteeing Powers to assist in the regulation of "accomplished facts," as far, at least, as Austria and Russia will be concerned.

The Northern Powers seem almost to forget that the Turkish question cannot be settled without the consent of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 422.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 23.)

(No. 603.)

My Lord, *Vienna, July* 20, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a political report, as marked in the margin, which has been addressed to me by Mr. Cooper from Sisek, Croatia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 422.

Vice-Consul Cooper to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir, *Sipek, Crotia, July* 18, 1877.

I HAD scarcely finished my letter to you on the 16th, when General Mollinari did me the honour of returning my visit. A long conversation followed. The General seemed greatly moved by the condition of the Rayahs in Bosnia.

He says that matters have now for so long been in such a disturbed state in that province that people cease to speak about the excesses.

But though Turkish cruelties no longer are the subject of common report, General Mollinari appeared to believe that they are still of common occurrence. He did not, however, give an account of any particular act of recent date. For many years the General must have been watching with interest the lot of a people like the Bosnians, who are of a common origin, and intimately connected with the Croats and Slavonians, whom the General is actually ruling, and it struck me that his earnestness in speaking of the Bosnian rayahs was more due to his sympathy with a Christian people under a Mahometan Government than to compassion called forth by recent cruelties. This opinion I have been rather confirmed in by personal observation.

On leaving Topusko I returned to Sipek, and yesterday visited Kostajnica and Drov. The latter is an Austrian village opposite Novi.

At both places I was in communication with the Austrian authorities. Refugees have not been passing the Una lately near these places, what have passed were pushed further in from the frontier, and the Bosnians about Drov and Kostajnica had come over for work in much the same way that in England there is always an influx of Irish at harvest.

The Austrians have a cordon of military posts along their frontier, and the Turks are watching theirs by a line of guard-houses garrisoned by the Mustahfiz. The Austrian troops are all under cover at night in houses, and they do not seem to be broken up in smaller detachments than a company.

On the frontier no one seemed to think that it was anything extraordinary that Bosnia should not be in a state of tranquillity, and the general interest seemed to be absorbed in the war round the Balkans.

To-morrow morning I leave for Brod, and hope to be in Serajevo by Monday, the 23rd.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HARRY COOPER.

No. 423.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 23.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 22 Juillet,* 1877.

PHOTIADES BEY nous télégraphie ce qui suit :—

"Les nouvelles alarmantes des agences télégraphiques au sujet du passage des Balkans par les Russes et de leur marche progressive sur Andrinople ont surexcité les esprits en Grèce. Cédant à la pression de l'opinion publique, le Gouvernement Hellénique prend des mesures extraordinaires pour hâter ses préparatifs de guerre et diriger des forces militaires vers la frontière. Il est urgent que le Gouvernement Impérial avise au maintien de la sécurité de nos provinces limitrophes en envoyant des troupes régulières. Ici on est unanime à créer une question Hellénique avant la conclusion de la paix avec la Russie. Selon toute probabilité, le premier signal d'insurrection partira de Crète, où tout serait préparé."

Veuillez entretenir confidentiellement Lord Derby de ce qui précède et me télégraphier le résultat.

No. 424.

Memorandum communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 23.

ON assure que depuis que le Cabinet de Vienne a acquis la conviction que l'Italie n'attendait que le moment de la mise à exécution du programme Russe pour mettre en

avant ses prétentions sur l'Albanie, et principalement sur le port d'Antivari, et qu'ainsi une entente secrète existe entre ces deux dernières Puissances, le premier a résolu de s'opposer efficacement à tout changement à apporter à la constitution politique du Vilayet du Danube.

No. 425.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 23.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, July* 23, 1877, 10 A.M.

MOST difficult to ascertain exactly nature of military preparations. At Belgrade these consist in fresh registration of military men, and sending the ammunition. At any rate, Servian exchequer empty, and fighting power almost nil.

At the worst they would be content with occupying certain border districts when no Turkish force exists any more there.

Prince Milan has his uncle as military agent at Imperial Russian head-quarters. This officer was here secretly last week to see His Highness, and went back to Roumania. Object of this visit unknown.

No. 426.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July* 23, 1877, 4 P.M.

WITH reference to Mr. Abbott's despatches of the 18th and 20th ultimo as to the risk of a massacre of the Nestorian Christians, point out to the Government to which you are accredited the evils likely to arise from the movements of the Koords, and urge strongly that measures be taken before it is too late to avert the danger which seems to be impending.

No. 427.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July* 23, 1877, 4·30 P.M.

INFORM Mr. Abbott of substance of my other telegram of this day, and a similar telegram has been sent to Mr. Layard.

No. 428.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July* 23, 1877, 4·45 P.M.

HAS any portion of the 7th Corps moved into the Dobrudscha? Where is the 15th Corps? What is the estimated force in Dobrudscha?

No. 429.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.[a]

(No. 363.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 23, 1877.

I HAVE received Mr. Abbott's despatches of the 18th and 20th June reporting that there is serious danger of a massacre of the Nestorian Christians by the Kurds, and I have to instruct you to point out to the Government to which you are accredited the evils which are likely to arise from the movements of these nomadic tribes.

You will at the same time urge the Porte in the strongest manner at once to take measures calculated to avert the danger which appears to be impending.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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[a] A similar despatch was addressed to Mr. Thomson.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 430.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Thomson.

(No. 59.) *Foreign Office, July 23, 1877.*

Sir,

WITH reference to my telegram of the 23rd instant on the subject of the dangers which threaten the Nestorian Christians, I have to state to you that I have addressed a similar instruction to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and I have to request that you will inform Mr. Abbott of the nature of the representations which you are authorized to make to the Persian Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 430*.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 23.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, July 23, 1877, 3·15 P.M.*

(Very Confidential.)

COUNT ANDRASSY stated to-day that he had received a telegram from Count Beust reporting that your Lordship has informed him that Her Majesty's Government do not object to the temporary occupation of Constantinople by Russia.

No. 431.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 24.)

(No. 5. Political.) *Ragusa, July 16, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE probability of an occupation of Bosnia by Austria has now again become a general topic of conversation in Dalmatia, and the statements contained in M. Tisza's speech on the 26th ultimo, with reference to the neutral attitude of the Austro-Hungarian Government, are severely criticised by the local press, inasmuch as military preparations of every description are being actively carried on all along the Dalmatian coast. By every steamer munitions of war or provisions are being landed, and the various military stations fortified.

The troops have received orders to hold themselves in readiness for active service. Within the last few days upwards of 800 mules have been collected between Ragusa and Klek, by which it appears that an occupation of Herzegovina is by no means improbable. Everything, in short, indicates that Austria is only awaiting the turn of events to cross the frontier and occupy the Turkish Provinces.

I have heard it stated that some understanding exists between Austria and Turkey, by which the former engages herself to protect the provinces from Montenegrin encroachments, so as to enable the latter to withdraw her troops, of which, as I had the honour to report to your Lordship in my despatch of the 14th instant, there are already some forty battalions at Antivari, under Suleiman Pasha, ready to be embarked in a few days for Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 432.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 24.)

(No. 610.) *Vienna, July 21, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the inclosed despatch, which has been addressed to me by Major Gonne, Military Attaché to this Embassy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 432.

Major Gonne to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir, *Vienna, July 21, 1877.*

AS far as I can ascertain at Vienna, the military situation is unchanged. In my humble opinion, the Austrians could only occupy Bosnia without the cost of mobilization in the event of a positive agreement with all three parties interested—the Turks, the "insurgents," and the Russians.

The Turks assure me there is nothing further from their wish than an Austrian occupation; Despotovic, representing the insurgents, goes through the form of consulting the Chief Bosniacs with a view of introducing "home rule," and is decidedly anti-Austrian; and, as regards the Russians, I am able, on good authority, to report a circumstance which by no means encourages the prevailing opinion that a friendly feeling is on the increase between the Austrian and Russian Governments.

On the 18th of the month the railways in Galicia, "by order," declined to transport through Austrian territory guns and military stores. Up to that moment Russia had passed exactly what she pleased in the way of goods along the Austrian lines of railway.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOS. GONNE, *Major, 17th Lancers, Military Attaché.*

No. 433.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tunis, July 23, 1877.*

HAVE honour to report that Tunisian Prime Minister having tendered his resignation, the Bey accepted it and named in his room General Mohamed.

No. 434.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 24, 1877, 3·20 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday respecting the Nestorian Christians, you might send Mr. Rassam to the district to report and do what he can for their protection. Mr. Thomson has been instructed to make a representation to the Persian Government respecting the Koords.

No. 435.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Blunt.

(No. 4.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 24, 1877.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 35 of the 9th instant, giving an account of the measures taken by the Turkish Government for the defence of the Balkans, and I approve of your intended visit to the Balkan district for the purpose of using your influence to prevent any disorderly proceedings on the part of the Turkish irregular troops.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 436.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.

(No. 24.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, July 24, 1877.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 84, Political, of the 8th instant, respecting the desire of the Turks to come to some understanding with Montenegro, and explaining

the circumstances under which you were induced to take action in the matter, and I have to state to you that your proceedings are entirely approved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 437.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Stuart.

(No. 42.) *Foreign Office, July 24, 1877.*

Sir,

HER Majesty's Government approve the language which you held to M. Tricoupi on the occasion of your reading to him my despatch No. 31 of the 2nd instant, relative to the support which Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to give to Hellenic interests, as reported in your Confidential despatch No. 159 of the 13th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 438.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 364.) *Foreign Office, July 24, 1877.*

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 363 of yesterday's date, on the subject of the dangers which threaten the Nestorian Christians, I authorize you to send Mr. Rassam to the district to report how matters stand, and to do his utmost for their protection.

I have instructed Her Majesty's Minister at Tehran to make a representation to the Persian Government respecting the movements of the Koords.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 439.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 56. Political.) *Aleih, July 5, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for the information of your Lordship, a copy of a despatch No. 74, and its inclosure, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting on the state of affairs in the district of Sidon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 439.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Aleih, July 5, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Abela, reporting on the delay in farming the taxes in that district, which prevents the inhabitants from realizing the produce of their already scanty harvest and which will cause them great losses and eventually much suffering, especially now that they have to support extra and very heavy burdens to supply the requirements of the Government to carry on the war.

The state of the district of Sidon may serve as a criterion for the other districts of Syria, where the amount of suffering and misery caused by exactions and the irregular manner of collecting the taxes is very great.

Recently the Mutaserif of Beyrout visited Sidon, and, I believe, represented to

the Mussulman inhabitants the evil consequences that would inevitably follow any display of fanaticism on their part, and earnestly recommended them to live on good terms with their Christian fellow-subjects, and I am told his exhortations have produced a good effect in calming the excitement of the Mussulmans and reassuring the Christians, especially as both parties are well aware that Raïf Effendi is a man who is thoroughly in earnest in what he says.

A new Kaïmakam, Djamal Effendi, has recently been appointed to Sidon, and as he is quite free from all local influences, it is to be hoped that, under the guidance of his active and intelligent Chief, Raïf Effendi, he will succeed in administering his district and preserving order better than his immediate predecessors, whose mal-administration and want of energy frequently formed the subject of just complaints.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 439.

Vice-Consul Abela to Consul-General Eldridge.

M. le Consul-Général, *Saïda, le 2 Juillet, 1877.*

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que jusqu'à ce jour, l'autorité n'a pas encore affermé les dîmes de ce district, tandis que les récoltes ont déjà commencé depuis environ deux mois. Un tel retard dans une pareille année, où les récoltes ne sont pas abondantes, et surtout dans les circonstances présentes, doit certainement augmenter la gêne des habitants. La raison en est, que, d'un côté, on prohibe aux agriculteurs de disposer librement de leurs produits, ce qui les expose à des dégâts de tout genre; d'autre part, il y a poursuite sévère pour le remboursement de l'impôt foncier, des arriérés et des autres taxes extraordinaires dont le pays vient d'être frappé.

Les taxes que le Gouvernement a, jusqu'à présent, créés, sont de quatre espèces: une Yfané (secour volontaire), une Yaané Djabrié (secours forcé), un double droit sur les chèvres et les brebis, et une contrevaleur de quatre-vingt-six chevaux réclamés de ce district. Le montant des nouveaux impôts peut égaler celui des dîmes ordinaires d'un total assez élevé par rapport aux moyens des habitants. Quant aux deux premiers impôts, dont l'un à titre volontaire et l'autre forcé, malgré la différence de leur qualité, les habitants ont été amenés presque tous à y contribuer. Le troisième impôt, doublé cette année sur les chèvres, a été rigoureusement exigé et encaissé. Pour ce qui est du quatrième relatif aux chevaux, on est en train de le percevoir, et plusieurs classes d'individus s'excusent de ne pouvoir pas y satisfaire. De plus on vient d'ébruiter, que la Porte va créer d'autres impôts, entre autres un emprunt forcé sur les immeubles égalant l'impôt foncier! Si cela se réalise il y aurait un grand danger que ce coup ne soit un nouveau malheur pour le pays; car surcharger des individus au-delà de leur force, c'est les exposer manifestement à en venir à quelque extrémité fâcheuse. C'est pourquoi, M. le Consul-Général, j'ai pris la liberté de porter cet état de choses à votre connaissance.

Daignez agréer, &c.
(Signé) HABIB ABELA.

No. 440.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 58. Political.) *Aleih, July 8, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 49 of the 14th ultimo, reporting that it was desirable to retain a certain Mahmoud Agha as member of the Medjliss of Lattakia in preference to his being appointed Bimbashi of volunteers, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting that, in consequence of my representation, Mahmoud Agha will retain his position as member of the Medjliss.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 440.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Aleih, July 8, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 14th ultimo, reporting that it was desirable that a certain Mahmoud Agha Hazнadar, who had been appointed Bimbashi of irregular cavalry, should be retained in his post of member of the Medjliss of Lattakia, I have the honour to report, for your Excellency's information, that I have recently received a communication from the Acting Governor-General of Syria, Izzet Pasha, the Mushir of the 5th corps d'armée, in which his Excellency informs me that, in consequence of my representations, it has been decided to retain Mahmoud Agha Hazнadar in his present position at Lattakia, which I have little doubt will produce a very reassuring effect on the population of that place, who would be still further reassured if Ahmed Shukri Effendi, whose dismissal by Zia Pasha I reported in my despatch of the 23rd ultimo, were reappointed Kaïmakam.

Although I have no official reports, I believe the disorders previously reported between Lattakia and Tripoli still continue, though not with the same intensity, as the mountaineers are now occupied with their harvest, but as soon as that is over, I fear, unless some more energetic measures are adopted, the whole of the plains will again be ravaged.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 441.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

Aleih, July 10, 1877.

(No. 59. Political.)

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 58 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a further despatch, and its inclosure, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting on the state of affairs in the district of Lattakia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 441.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Aleih, July 10, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 8th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, an extract from a letter which I have since received from Lattakia, reporting the present state of affairs in that district, which, as I feared, continues very unsatisfactory.

In particular, I beg to call your Excellency's attention to the concluding paragraph of this extract, as to the effect produced by the dismissal of the Kaïmakam, Ahmet Shukri Effendi, which was reported in my despatch of the 23rd ultimo. I am taking officious steps to Izzet Pasha, the Acting Vali, of the necessity, for the sake of tranquillity and public order, of reinstating this active and well-disposed functionary in his post of Kaïmakam of Lattakia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 441.

Extract of a Letter dated July 8, 1877, from Lattakia.

JE regrette d'avoir à vous informer que contrairement à mon attente les montagnards Ansaryéhs du district de Gebelé ont repris leur infame brigandage dans

les villages de la plaine de Lattaquié. La veille du 6 courant ils ont saccagé un village non loin deux heures de cette ville. L'Agent Consulaire d'Autriche, qui y a une propreté, en a perdu pour environ 200*l.*, m'a-t-il dit.

Quelques Musulmans malveillants attribuent ces mouvements des Ansaryéhs à des nouvelles que ces derniers reçoivent par des Chrétiens qui vivent parmi eux relativement à la guerre en les faisant croire qu'elle est funeste pour les Turcs, ce qui encourage, disent-ils, les Ansaryéhs à faire ce qu'ils font. Quant à moi je ne puis admettre ce raisonnement, parce que, jusqu'ici ce sont les propriétés des Chrétiens sur lesquelles les Ansaryéhs ont fait main-basse; je crois au contraire que les Ansaryéhs ne sont pas encouragés ainsi que par la certitude qu'ils ont que le Gouvernement ne dispose pas à l'heure qu'il est d'une force suffisante pour les mettre à la raison et ils savent que plus tard il y aura moyen d'acquérir le pardon comme d'ordinaire.

Quant à ce qui a poussé les Ansaryéhs de reprendre leur brigandage avec empressement et avant le temps supposé, je dois l'attribuer à l'assassinat d'un de leurs chefs (Ali Eddé) par un certain Hagi Daoud, Cavalier du Gouvernement; ce qui a dû beaucoup irriter la Montagne, d'autant plus que les autorités locales n'ont fait aucun cas de cet incident sous prétexte que l'assassiné était un chef de brigands.

Je pense attirer l'attention du Caïmacam sur les cancans des Musulmans à l'égard des Chrétiens, de peur qu'en prenant des proportions ne prennent une mauvaise tournure.

C'est facheux que, quoique ce Caïmacam ne s'est point montré défavorable aux Chrétiens, les Musulmans ont quelque peu changé depuis la destitution de Chukri Effendi. Les zaptiés même sont devenus arrogants envers les Chrétiens.

No. 442.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

Therapia, July 14, 1877.

(No. 776. Secret.)

My Lord,

I AM informed on trustworthy authority that there was a discussion in the Council of Ministers some days ago, immediately after the arrival of the British fleet in Besika Bay, as to whether in the event of Her Majesty's Government asking that it should be permitted to come up to Constantinople the permission should be granted. It appears that some of the Ministers, but I am not certain which of them, expressed themselves strongly in the negative, on the ground that England's policy was not definite and distinct, and that her object in bringing her fleet up to Constantinople might just as likely be to take, sooner or later, hostile measures against Turkey as to check the aggressive and ambitious designs of Russia.

I have reason, however, to believe that the Sultan did not concur in this view.

It has been generally reported in Constantinople, and devoutly believed by most of my colleagues, that I asked for a private audience of the Sultan in order to obtain His Majesty's leave for the fleet to come to Constantinople, and that His Majesty refused to grant it.

The Christians of the capital are under the impression that the fleet is to be brought here solely for their protection, and I have been constantly requested by some of the leading members of the Christian communities to call it up here at once.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 443.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

Therapia, July 14, 1877.

(No. 777.)

My Lord,

THE reports that I have sent to your Lordship with respect to the cruelties and outrages alleged to be committed by the Russians and others at their instigation upon the Mussulman populations of Europe and Asia may lead to very grave results, should the Turks have recourse to acts of revenge and retaliation. This is especially to be feared in Bulgaria. Your Lordship is aware that I have done, and am doing, my utmost to induce the Turkish Government to protect the Christians, and to restrain the Mohammedans from following the example which, it is asserted, has been set to

them. I have thought it desirable to write a despatch on this subject to Mr. Consul Blunt, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose.

It is to be hoped that the rumours that have reached Constantinople of the proceedings of the Russians are exaggerated. But there cannot be a doubt that the Turkish Government and Turkish people are coming to a firm conviction that it is the intention of Russia to exterminate the Mussulmans in Bulgaria or to drive them out of the country, as they have done in other territories which they have conquered and occupied by a Mahommedan population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 443.

Mr. Layard to Consul Blunt.

Therapia, July 14, 1877.

Sir,

REPORTS are reaching me from so many independent sources of great cruelties and outrages committed, it is alleged, by the Russian troops, and by Christian Bulgarians at the instigation of the Russian authorities, that there is reason to believe that they are not altogether without foundation. Vice-Consul Dupuis, from Adrianople, and Vice-Consul Calvert, from Philippopoli, state that the Bulgarians are accused of having murdered in cold blood a number of helpless Mussulmans, men, women, and children, who were flying before the Russian invasion. The former has been informed by the Vali of Adrianople that the Russian vanguard has established a military tribunal at Selvi, which is proceeding to the trial of Mussulmans alleged to be implicated in the Bulgarian insurrection of last year, and that the Bulgarian Christians are being called upon to declare whether they have suffered during that insurrection. Should they accuse any Turk he is immediately shot or hung.

It is much to be feared that these barbarous proceedings, so little in accordance with humanity and with the true spirit of Christianity, may give rise to horrible acts of retaliation on the part of the Mussulman population. You will, I am sure, do your best, and use the influence you justly possess over the Turkish civil and religious authorities, to prevent, if possible, so lamentable a result, which might lead to incalculable misery and bloodshed. I am assured from the very highest quarters that orders have been sent to those authorities to restrain the Mussulmans, and to do their utmost to promote a friendly feeling between them and the Christians, and to prevent any ill-treatment of the latter in retaliation for the cruelties practised upon the Mussulman population in Europe and Asia. The kindly and generous sentiments of the Sultan towards his Christian as well as all other subjects cannot be called in question; and as you are well aware there are among the Turkish authorities and notables many just, tolerant, and humane men, who are ready to protect the weak and innocent, whatever may be their faith, you must appeal to them to prevent the bloodshed to which the occurrences arising out of the Russian invasion of Bulgaria are calculated to lead.

You will instruct in this sense Mr. Dupuis and Mr. Calvert, and the other Consular Agents in your district.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 444.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 778.) *Therapia, July* 14, 1877.

My Lord,

MAHMOUD DAMAT PASHA, the Grand Master of the Artillery, and the Sultan's brother-in-law, spoke in the strongest terms to Sir Collingwood Dickson, who was visiting him this morning, about the cruelties and outrages alleged to be committed by the Russians, and the Bulgarian Christians at their instigation, upon the Mussulmans.

His Highness requested Sir Collingwood to write down what he had said to be communicated to me. I inclose the copy of the memorandum dictated to Sir Collingwood Dickson by his Highness. I sent the substance of it to your Lordship by telegraph as it relates to a matter of very grave importance, and is a further proof of

the feeling arising amongst the Mahommedans of Turkey in consequence of the horrible treatment to which their brethren in race and faith are subjected, and which, they are beginning to be convinced, proves a design on the part of Russia to exterminate the Mahommedan population of Bulgaria.

I am assured by the Porte that the accounts giving details of the horrible cruelties to which the innocent Mussulman population has been exposed will not be allowed to appear in the Turkish newspapers, as, were they generally known, they might excite a spirit of vengeance difficult to repress or check.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 444.

Memorandum.

TO-DAY his Highness Mahmoud Pasha Damat, during an interview with Sir Collingwood Dickson, made the following communication to him, which he requested might be conveyed to Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador:—

"The present war does not resemble those that have previously occurred between Turkey and Russia or the wars between other civilized countries.

"Russia's intentions are very evident; she has declared war against the Turks with the professed intention of redressing the wrongs of the Bulgarian Christians, but her real one is to complete the destruction of Islamism, although she announced to Europe that her desire was to procure a better form of Government for the Christians under the rule of the Sultan, and to ameliorate their condition.

The aim of the enemy is to deprive Turkey of her provinces in Roumelia, and to attain it she thinks it right to commit every kind of atrocity towards the unhappy Mussulman inhabitants who do not fly in time on the approach of the Russian soldiers. The Russians, since entering Bulgaria with their armies, have shown what their own Christianity is worth by setting at nought the usages of civilized warfare in bombarding and destroying Rustchuk and other towns, and above all by inciting the Bulgarian Christians to commit unheard-of cruelties upon their Mussulman fellow-countrymen and by perpetrating these deeds themselves. In every place occupied by Russian troops murder and rapine have been of constant occurrence, and only this morning information was received of the massacre of 200 Moslem men, women, and children who, in arabas, were escaping to Varna from the neighbourhood of Sistova and Rustchuk. These fugitives were overtaken by some Russian cavalry, who murdered the men and children, violated the women, and then killed them by ripping them open. Many other instances of such horrors were known, but the particular one above mentioned came to the notice of Government this morning. We leave Europe to judge these iniquitous and barbarous proceedings of a Government which pretends to come for the regeneration of the Christian population.

"One is lost in a thousand conjectures on reading the correspondence between England and Russia. Will Roumelia pass into other hands? Will the Straits perhaps be opened to ships of war, and will Constantinople become the appanage of another Power? All these and other facts may yet be accomplished. Turkey, perhaps, dismembered or made to disappear like so many other Governments.

"But Europe ought to be aware that the Mussulmans will not calmly resign themselves to abandon their country. There will be much bloodshed. The Turks will fight to the last, and will only cede to superior force.

"Europe ought to take this into very serious consideration, above all, England, which has always been the sincere and disinterested friend of the Porte.

"Entire Europe rose against us on account of the occurrences in Bulgaria. Nevertheless it must allow that the prompt repression of an insurrection always entails many evils; the Imperial Government was the first to deplore them. The insurrection in Bulgaria, fomented by Russian intrigues, might have brought the most fatal consequences upon the Ottoman Empire.

"Meanwhile Europe remains utterly indifferent to the atrocities committed by the Russian troops since the moment when they invaded Turkish territory.

"I consider it my duty to draw the attention of his Excellency the Ambassador to the fact that the Russians massacre without pity all Mussulmans who fall into their hands—men, women, and children, the aged and infirm, none have been spared in this horrible butchery, so disgraceful to the age in which we live.

"The Government has felt it necessary to detach from the army of the Danube several battalions of regular troops to keep the Mussulman population in check, and prevent them from avenging the blood of their co-religionists. But soon, despite all the good-will of Government, it will find itself utterly helpless to repress the rage and indignation of the Mussulmans.

"Already, on this other side of the Balkans, great excitement has arisen amongst the Mussulmans, who desire to make reprisals. Can we contemplate with indifference the tortures and horrible cruelties of which the Mussulmans are the victims, by preventing our people from avenging the blood of their brethren? This appears to me most difficult, and the consequence of all these terrible facts will be a general massacre which we think it our duty to put before all Europe, and to decline all responsibility for what may occur hereafter."

(Signed) C. DICKSON, *Lieutenant-General, Military Attaché.*

Therapia, July 14, 1877.

No. 445.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 779.) *Therapia, July* 14, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 276 of the 5th instant, inclosing, for my information, the explanation of Prince Gortchakow respecting the destruction of the British Consulate at Rustchuk by shells from the Russian batteries at Giurgevo, I may venture to remark that not a single shell appears to have struck the Russian Consulate, which, I am assured, stands close to the British Consulate, and in an equally exposed position. It is a curious circumstance that, whilst the other Consulates, the hospitals, and public buildings should have been knocked to pieces, this fortunate building should have remained untouched.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 446.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 780. Confidential.) *Therapia, July* 14, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE read with great interest your Lordship's despatch to Mr. Stuart, No. 34 of the 2nd instant, printed in the Confidential papers. I trust that your Lordship will not consider it impertinent in me to say that I most entirely concur in the advice given by your Lordship to the Hellenic Government as to the policy which it should pursue during the present war between Russia and Turkey. The language which I have held to the Greek clergy and notables and to M. Coumouriotti, when he has done me the honour of consulting me, has been in complete accordance with it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 447.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 781.) *Therapia, July* 15, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Vice-Consul Sankey relating to the Russian movements in the Dobrudcha and the state of Kustendje.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 447.

Vice-Consul Sankey to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Kustendje, July* 13, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that yesterday there was skirmishing going on within four miles of the railway line fourteen miles north of Medjidieh. The Russians have possession of Tchernavoda. All the troops from there have fallen back on Silistria, and the eight battalions at Medjidieh are following them.

Between Babadagh and Kustendji a body of Circassians had a fight with the advanced guard of General Zimmerman's corps, in which thirty Circassians were killed and forty taken prisoners, and Fahri Bey telegraphs to me that the prisoners were shot.

The Cossack cavalry has been seen within five miles of Kustendji, and all the Turkish troops have been embarked on board two Government steamers, which are ready to start at a moment's notice. The Russians are so near that the Konak has been closed, and the Kaimakam and staff sleep on board. The Turks did intend to make a fight at Medjidieh, but their plans have been again altered, and I am informed that the troops will fall back on Silistria. Some few Tartar families are returning to their villages to cut the crops, which are very fine. Every horned beast in the country has been driven down towards Varna, and only a few hundred sheep left here and there. The German refugees have had their carts and horses returned to them, and sufficient subscription has been collected to last them for a fortnight as yet.

People here, even in official positions, are talking and writing about Circassian robberies and persecutions, and are wilfully blind to the fact that these Circassians are armed with Government rifles, and have been ordered to drive off every horse and ox in the country towards Varna, so as to leave as little sustenance as possible in the country. The Circassians, it is but fair to say, have done this without unnecessary cruelty, and in every case of cutting and wounding, investigation has proved that these acts have been committed by Tartars and Lazis.

The Government not wishing to take the odium of such action, allows it to be attributed to Circassians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. F. SANKEY.

No. 448.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No 782.) *Therapia, July* 15, 1877.

My Lord,

I INCLOSE copies of telegrams received to-day from Consul Blunt and Vice-Consul Brophy, the substance of which I have telegraphed to your Lordship. These gentlemen were obliged to telegraph in Turkish, and their telegrams have been translated into French and thence into English. This must account for their phraseology.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 448.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

(Translated from the Turkish.)

(Telegraphic.) *Kazanlik, July* 14, 1877.

YESTERDAY, about 7 o'clock, I arrived at Kazanlik, and from the complaints of those who, from the barbarous conduct of the enemy, have abandoned the villages situated between Tirnova, Dranova, and Valona, I perceived that the people were in despair at the enemy having burnt Malova, Malcotch, and most of the other villages. To-day also, at about 8, the Russian field-artillery, passing the gorge at Hain-Keuy, burnt the villages of Yeni Mahalla, in the district of Kazanlik and Eskidji, belonging

to Zaghra Djedelid, and massacred the inhabitants. I learnt this news from those who arriving from the above-named places informed the authorities.

These villages are at four hours from here to the telegraph line, and at the same distance from the railway towards Yeni Zaghra.

Up to the present moment the Kaimakam, the Judge, and all the Notables, Christians and Mussulmans, have reassured and quieted the people.

The advance of the enemy is possible.

Inclosure 2 in No. 448.

Vice-Consul Brophy to Mr. Layard.

(Translated from the Turkish.) *Slimnia, July* 14, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Mussulman inhabitants of Sistova and Tirnova are dispersed towards Slimnia, and are in a deplorable state.

According to authentic information, the Russians stir up the Bulgarians of these places, giving them hats, and arming them, and do an unparalleled amount of harm to the Mussulman families, whether they flee or not, and to those Mussulmans whom they seize on their road. They tore out the eyes of the Mussulmans whom they killed near Sistova, and filled them with bread; they take off the Turkish women's feridjis, and commit unexampled horrors. Besides robbing them of their goods they force them to change their religion. Such conduct, far from being worthy of a Government, is not even so of a barbarous nation.

If we consider the regrets and griefs of the Mussulmans at such a state of things, it is evident that sooner or later there will be great troubles between the two peoples, and the Russians will be the cause of them.

I have the honour to warn you that if a stop is not put to these barbarities, the consequences will be most deplorable.

No. 449.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 25.)

(No. 783.) *Therapia, July* 15, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 283, of the 5th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have called the attention of Hobart Pasha, who advises the Porte upon questions of blockade, to the statement of Messrs. Glover's correspondent at Odessa to the effect that no Turkish vessels of war have ever appeared off Odessa, and that the Russian Company's steamers run regularly between that port and Nicolaieff. Hobart Pasha maintains that the blockade of the port of Odessa is effective; that Turkish vessels of war have been within eight miles of it, but could not approach nearer without engaging in hostilities; and that the fact that steamers drawing but little water can run close along the coast between that port and Nicolaieff, a comparatively short distance, cannot be considered a proof that the blockade is not effective.

Hobart Pasha is, I believe, about to cruize in the Black Sea with a squadron of three iron-clads and a small ship. We believe that he will effectually prevent any vessel of war or commerce appearing in those waters.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 450.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 25.)

(No. 784.) *Therapia, July* 16, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 760 of the 11th instant, I have the honour to inclose copy of a Memorandum which I have given to Safvet Pasha, calling his Excellency's attention to the threatened attack of the Kurds upon the Nestorian tribes.

His Excellency expressed great concern at receiving this information, and at once telegraphed to the Vali of Diarbekr to report without delay on the subject, and to take every possible measure for the protection of the Nestorians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 450.

Memorandum.

INFORMATION from trustworthy sources leads to the belief that the Kurds are meditating an attack upon the Nestorian Christians. It is consequently to be feared that the Nestorian districts may again be exposed to devastation and their inhabitants to massacre, such as they experienced some thirty years ago, when Beder Khan Bey and Nour Ullah Bey fell upon them.

The Porte is urgently advised to adopt some immediate measures to prevent so lamentable a fate again befalling the Nestorian Christians, in whom England feels a very lively interest, who have at all times been loyal and peaceful subjects of the Sultan, and who have hitherto confided in his protection. If they were exposed, men, women, and children, to outrages and slaughter, as they were in 1846, public opinion throughout England would be deeply and painfully affected. It cannot be doubted that the Turkish Government will feel the great importance of taking steps without delay to prevent the Kurds from carrying out their intention of invading the Nestorian country.

No. 451.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 25.)

(No. 788. Secret.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 16, 1877.

INFORMATION reached me last week, from a source which led me to attach importance to it, that the question of making proposals for peace to Russia had been discussed in the Turkish Cabinet. I was even told that Safvet Pasha had been requested by his colleagues to draft a despatch to Musurus Pasha, instructing his Excellency to enter into communication with your Lordship on the subject.

Mr. Sandison has been able to make inquiries as to the truth of this report of Safvet Pasha himself, and of persons in high and confidential employment at the Porte. He has received from them the most positive and distinct assurances that it is entirely unfounded; that the question of offering terms of peace has never been discussed or mentioned in the Cabinet; and that no Minister would at this moment venture to propose to the Sultan and the country to make peace.

Mr. Sandison was at the same time given to understand that there was not the slightest prospect of the Turkish Government listening to any proposal for peace unless the Russians achieved some very signal success, that is, unless they had crossed the Balkans, and established themselves in the country to the south of those mountains.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 452.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 25.)

(No. 790.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July* 17, 1877.

MR. READE came here on Sunday last to report to me on the state of his district. I had not required him to do so, and have directed him to return at once to

Rustchuk, and to remain there as long as possible. I beg to inclose copy of the instructions that I have given him.

I also inclose copy of a report that he has addressed to me.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 452.

Mr. Layard to Consul Reade.

Therapia, July 16, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE to instruct you to return at once to Varna, and from there, if possible, to your post at Rustchuk, where it is desirable that you should remain as long as circumstances will admit. Should the Russians be about to besiege the town, you should leave it, and go to any place within your district where you could best afford protection to British interests, and keep me informed of what is taking place in Bulgaria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 2 in No. 452.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Varna, July 14, 1877.

Sir,

IN continuation of my last despatch I have the honour to report that on the 11th instant I succeeded in getting the police force of Rustchuk established in the town, when I at once perceived a totally different state of things, as the Bashi-Bazouks, seeing they were watched, ceased entering the houses of the Bulgarians. I myself went about the place, and as these people were aware that I had spoken to the Pasha about them they appeared to be very careful in letting me see that their object was to preserve order; but I was very soon informed by many of the Bulgarians that a very favourable change had taken place as to their position, and on the following day, when the troops had retreated from Bjela, I perceived that the Bashi-Bazouks were still more well-conducted. The fact is that the rumour that Mussulmans had been massacred by Bulgarians and Cossacks evidently had had a very marked effect upon them.

I personally ascertained what mischief had been done by these people, and found that pillaging of almost empty houses was all that they had done, and when I left Rustchuk on the evening of the 12th, I was informed by the Bulgarians themselves that they had nothing to fear. This was evidently from the panic that had seized the Mussulmans, who were all flying from the place.

It was reported at Rustchuk that in several villages that had been visited by the Cossacks the Mussulmans had been massacred by the Bulgarians who were with these troops, and I afterwards heard that in six other villages near Tirnova all the Mussulmans had been massacred and the houses burnt by the Bulgarians and Cossacks. I saw one report received by the Vali, in which it was stated that the writers had just returned from burying twenty-four men, women, and children who had been massacred. The Mussulmans are flying in all directions, and it was melancholy to see the poor women and children about the roads in a state of utter despair.

On the crossing of the Russians at Sistova, the Ottoman troops at Rustchuk, and a considerable force from Shumla, all under the command of Ahmed Eyoub Pasha, took up a position at Bjela, apparently to oppose the advance of the Russians, but on the latter advancing the Turks retired on Obretenik first, and then on the village of Terstenik, and from the latter to Kadikoi and Rustchuk, where I left them. The Russian advance guard was at Terstenik. The only encounter that had then taken place was some skirmishing near Bjela. I was informed by some English newspaper correspondents who had been at the front that the Russians had turned Ahmed Eyoub's left flank, and this appeared to be afterwards confirmed by a report received by the Vali, stating that the Cossacks were in the Nahier of Rasgrad.

Having then learnt that the railway staff was to be withdrawn from Tchernavoda (the first station from Rustchuk) to Rasgrad (the third), and that the trains would no longer run further than Rasgrad, and being assured by the Bulgarians of Rustchuk that they had nothing more to fear, I came away, so as not to be shut up in Rustchuk

should it be besieged by the Russians, and when I could not have communicated with your Excellency, and also as all my colleagues were away.

I was informed by the Turkish authorities that the Russians occupied Sistova, Plevna, and Tirnova, and that at the latter place a Russian Civil Governor and Administration had been already established, and that the Russian flag was flying at the three places.

On my way back to Varna I could see nothing but Mussulman men, women, and children flying in a state of terror in the direction of Varna, and on my arrival at this place I learnt that all the Mussulmans of the Kustendje district had been brought there by the Ottoman steamers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

No. 453.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 791.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 17, 1877.

IN the present state of affairs I am afraid that it will be impossible to obtain the amnesty for the Bulgarians imprisoned for complicity in the insurrection of last year, promised to me by the Sultan. The last time I saw His Majesty he referred to the subject, observing that he had not forgotten his promise, but that whilst the Russians were invading Bulgaria it was impossible to set at large persons who were known to be Russian sympathizers, and who would probably make use of their freedom at once to incite the Bulgarian population to rise against his authority. "But," His Majesty added, "as soon as the war is ended I shall give the widest amnesty possible to all my Bulgarian subjects."

I saw that it was useless to press His Majesty about the amnesty at that moment; but I have given a Memorandum respecting it to Safvet Pasha, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 453.

Memorandum.

THE Earl of Derby, in a despatch dated the 28th ultimo, mentions the receipt of a copy of the petition signed by sixty-two Bulgarians who are still confined in the Mitrihané Prison at Constantinople. This petition was published in the local newspapers and forwarded by me to his Lordship.

The Earl of Derby instructs me to urge the Porte to hasten the execution of the promise so solemnly given to me by His Majesty the Sultan, that the Bulgarian prisoners should be amnestied.

The Earl of Derby cannot doubt that a promise made by the Sultan will be fulfilled.

Therapia, July 10, 1877.

No. 454.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 702. Secret.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 17, 1877.

THE Sultan sent for Hobart Pasha last week, and, after having expressed his regret to him that, owing to various circumstances, he had not been recently employed on active service, told him that he had commanded that a squadron should be at once placed under his orders. His Majesty added that he should be under no restriction as to where he should take it, and how he should use it.

Hobart Pasha was very much gratified by the kind and cordial reception given to

him by the Sultan, who hinted that influences adverse to the employment of foreigners had hitherto prevailed, but that he was resolved that they should no longer do so.

The squadron under Hobart Pasha's orders consists of three large ironclads and a smaller vessel. He has determined to cruize in the Black Sea off the Russian coasts. There is a report that the Russians are collecting a number of steamers at Sebastopol, with a view to conveying troops for a sudden descent upon some point of Turkish territory. Hobart Pasha is to take measures to ascertain the truth of this report, and to prevent the expedition if it be really contemplated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 455.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 25.)

(No. 793.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 16, 1877.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 273 of the 5th instant, I have the honour to state that, in pursuance of your Lordship's instructions, I called the attention of Safvet Pasha to-day to the conduct of the Governor of Crete in preventing Christian families from leaving the Island. I also brought to his Excellency's notice some of the statements contained in Consul Sandwith's despatch to me No. 32 of the 10th ultimo, especially that relating to the Turkish Judge of the Commercial Court at Rethymo, who, it is stated, can neither read nor write. I pointed out to his Excellency that whilst such a state of things existed it could scarcely be a matter of surprise that the Christian inhabitants of Crete were hostile to the Turkish Government, and ready to rebel against it.

His Excellency took a note of what I had said to him, and promised that inquiries should be made into the matters to which I had referred.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 456.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 25.)

(No. 795. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 17, 1877.

A SHORT time ago the Armenian Patriarch sent me a draft of a letter which he was about to address to the Archbishop of Canterbury, stating that he intended that the English language should be taught in the Armenian schools, and asking for some assistance from the English Church and people towards their support. The Patriarch further informed me that his desire to introduce English into the Armenian schools dated from some years past, but that it had always been most strenuously opposed by the Russian Ambassador, who insisted that the Russian language should be taught in them instead.

The letter in question has, I am informed, been sent to the Archbishop. There is no doubt that the knowledge of English and of English literature would be of much use to the Armenians, and for other reasons the intention of the Patriarch should be encouraged. The American missionaries have already done much to introduce our language amongst this people, through the numerous educational and religious establishments they have founded in different parts of the Turkish Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 457.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 25.)

(No. 796.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July* 17, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of despatches from Her Majesty's Consuls in Bulgaria and Roumelia, reporting on the state of affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 457.

Vice-Consul Stokes to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Sulina, July* 7, 1877.

I HAVE nothing of importance to communicate to your Excellency from this place. Everything is quiet and tranquil here. The Turkish iron-clad fleet, consisting of five ships, left the Roads on the evening of 28th ultimo, with the reported intention of bombarding Odessa and Sebastopol, and returned to Sulina on the 3rd instant, without, I believe, having been within range of the batteries of either place. On the 29th ultimo a Turkish monitor, the "Ifsu Rahman," and an armed Turkish steam-tug, bombarded the small town or village of Zibriani, about twenty miles from this, and they report that they dismounted two guns; but whether this is true or not I cannot say. On the evening of the 4th instant the Turkish fleet again left the Roads for Odessa and Sebastopol (so it is reported), and have not yet returned. All communication between this place and Tultcha is still closed, and provisions are in consequence both scarce and dear.

I have, &c.
(Signed) OCTAVUS STOKES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 457.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, July* 11, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I learn from the Governor-General to-day that a Russian vanguard has established a military tribunal at Selvi, within five or six hours from the frontier, which is proceeding to the trial of Mussulmans alleged to be implicated in the Bulgarian insurrection of last year; that the Bulgarians are being called upon to declare whether they have suffered during that insurrection; and on receiving a reply in the affirmative, the Turks are at once either shot or hanged. Also that the Russians are committing great barbarities on the poor defenceless Mussulman inhabitants of that part of the country.

Orders have been issued for the immediate calling out of further reinforcements of Mustahfiz throughout the province, and that arms have been telegraphed for to Constantinople for 15,000 men.

A military camp is to be formed in Adrianople, and troops from the capital have been arriving all day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

Inclosure 3 in No. 457.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, July* 13, 1877.

BEYOND the fact of great exertions and activity of the local Government in forwarding troops to the front, and collecting reinforcements from the surrounding country, as well as placing Adrianople in a state of defence, there has been nothing of importance to communicate since addressing your Excellency on the 11th instant.

The rumours of the presence of the Russians in Selvi, Plevna, and Tirnova, the other side of the Balkans, and the arrival of the fugitive families from Sofia and Slimnia causes some anxiety and uneasiness in the public mind, otherwise complete tranquillity continues to reign in this town.

A feeling of some disappointment, however, seems to show itself in the Turkish mind, and reputable Mussulmans say that England is indifferent and cold towards them, and that Europe will pass over in silence the barbarities being committed by the Russians in Bulgaria.

Intelligence reaches me from a private source that the irregulars on their way to Kazanlik were guilty of disorders and cattle-lifting against Turks and Christians in Eski-Sagra, and that complaints receive no attention from the Kaïmakam.

Among other items of information I have learnt that upwards of 1,500 tithes-collectors have within the last ten days been nominated for this sandjak, of whom scarcely 150 are Christians.

The following military forces and war materials for Yeni-Zagra have been reported to me from the 3rd to the 10th, viz.:—11,121 men, 255 officers, 45 guns, 8 loads Martini-Henry rifles, 52 loads ammunition, 15 loads materiel and baggage, 380 horses, 85 heavy guns (announced for defence of Adrianople).

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

P.S.—A rumour exists that Minister of War is dead.

J. H. D.

Inclosure 4 in No. 457.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Mr. Layard.

Philippopoli, July 11, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that considerable uneasiness is beginning to be apparent among the Turkish population of this town in consequence of the alarming rumours concerning the Russian advance, which, in the absence of authentic information, obtain credence here.

Two nights ago a meeting of the leading Mussulmans was held at the Governor's residence, in the course of which it was, I hear, proposed that an immediate levy of Bashi-Bazouks should be organized. This motion, supported by the majority of those present, was very properly scouted by the Mutessarif, but his Excellency, nevertheless, informs me this morning that he has received orders to levy a body of irregular auxiliary troops, as the Bashi-Bazouks are now euphemistically called.

I strongly suspect that this order has been obtained in opposition to the Mutesserif's advice by urgent and exaggerated representations as to a possible Bulgarian movement, made by the Turkish Beys of Philippopolis, whose influence over the Porte often outweighs that of the Governor for the time being.

The present enrolment of Bashi-Bazouks being exclusive of the new levy of Mustaphiz, which has also been ordered by the Porte, it is easy to foresee that the volunteers, drawn as they will be from the last remnant of the Turkish able-bodied male peasantry, will not forsake their homes and the splendid harvest which is crowning the labours of the agriculturist this summer, without looking for compensation in the license to plunder, which the Bashi-Bazouk regards as his privilege and reward.

The Mutessarif assured me that all possible measures would be taken to preserve order, though he feared it would not be quite an easy matter to prevent occasional excesses.

The new levy of Mustaphis, comprising the whole remaining contingent of that class of reserves, will in this district furnish a force of four battalions, or about 3,000 men. The number of auxiliaries to be raised has been fixed at 1,600. With the two battalions of Mustaphiz already existing, the combatant force of the district will thus be raised to about 6,000, including the reserves to be called out in the Cazas of Sultan, Yeni, Liki, Zughier, Hasskeui, Tchirpan, and Kazanlik, which form part of separate military circumscriptions, and may be expected to contribute about 8,000 additional troops. To bring, however, these men into a fair state of efficiency, will require months of drill, and at present, though the Pasha informs me that both serviceable arms and ammunition will be sent from Constantinople, the Mustaphiz called out this year are still armed with muzzle-loading rifles.

It is generally believed here, although the authorities disclaim the intention, that the Mustaphiz will be sent, in case of emergency, to guard the Balkan passes, whilst the irregulars will remain behind to keep in awe any Bulgarians who might deem the hour propitious for creating a diversion in favour of the invader.

Apart from the likelihood of future disturbance arising from the employment of Bashi-Bazouks, I am glad still to be able to report that general tranquillity prevails, and that the Mussulman community continues peaceable and inoffensive in its attitude towards the Christians.

The feeling at present dominant in the minds of the Mussulmans appears to be alarm on account of their women, whose persons they fear will not be inviolate in the hands of the Russian soldiery. Some propose to send their families to the Mussulman villages of Mount Rhodope, whilst a few have asked their Christian friends to afford an asylum to their families in case of danger. Their apprehensions were partially allayed by the arrival of a Turk from Sistova, on the Danube, who reported that the Russians did not maltreat the Mussulman inhabitants. But to-day the disquieting rumour has been spread that the Russians having arrived at Selvi, killed several Turks there, disarmed the Mussulman inhabitants, and bestowed their arms on the Bulgarians.

The danger for the Christian population here, I apprehend, will not be great so long as the Russians behave humanely towards the Turks; but should the idea take hold of the Mussulman community that the Russians are bent on a mission of retribution, which the fact of the alleged transfer of arms from the Turks to the Bulgarians at Selvi leads the former to entertain, they might easily be worked up to a pitch of desperation dangerous to the Christians.

As an indication of the conciliatory policy followed by the Turkish authorities at present, it may be worth mentioning that the Mutessarif and the leading officials of the place, accompanied by the Mollah and the Mussulman members of the Medjliss, found time, notwithstanding the press of work caused by the military preparations, to be present at the public examinations held this week in the Greek and Bulgarian schools.

At Tatar-Bazardjik the Kaïmakam and a number of the principal Mussulmans and Bulgarians the other day attended a dinner party given by a local Bulgarian.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. CALVERT.

Inclosure 5 in No. 457.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Yeni-Zaghra, July 12, 1877.

Sir,

I ARRIVED here yesterday afternoon, and, before starting for Eski-Zaghra and Kyzanlik, I report to your Excellency the following information which I have obtained from the Kaïmakam and other sources:—

The Russians have occupied Tirnova and Selvi, and Cossack patrols have even approached Gabrovo. A great number of Mussulman fugitives from Tirnova and the neighbouring villages have crossed the Balkans through the Ferditch defile, and others from Selvi have taken refuge in Kyzanlik. The Kaïmakam informs me that the destitution of the refugees has called for measures of relief from the authorities, who have supplied them with 1,000 rations. The number of these fugitives appears to be daily increasing, under the fear caused by the reports of atrocities committed near Sistova by the Bulgarians and Cossacks.

Though the particulars regarding the progress of the Russians are not official, and I cannot therefore vouch for their truth, I am inclined to credit them.

The Kaïmakam tells me that eleven guns have been mounted in the Shipka Pass, and that ammunition is coming up. Half a battalion of troops have been sent to the Feditch defile, and a like number to the Khain defile.* The Mahommedan villagers in the vicinity of those places are being armed, with a view to assist the regular troops.

Last night three special trains full of troops passed this on their way to Yambol, where they will march to the Kryan Pass.

All the troops who passed through this place, with the exception of a battalion of

* Hain-Kioi.

Koordish volunteers, have conducted themselves in an orderly manner, and even the Koords committed no greater excesses than the robbing of orchards.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 458.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 797.) *Therapia, July 17, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Sultan asked me two days ago, through Mahmoud Damat Pasha, whether Her Majesty's Government, considering the very critical position of affairs, would object to Shefket Pasha receiving a command at Soukhoum Kaleh. The army, His Majesty said, was greatly deficient in good officers, and Shefket Pasha was not only an able and active general, but one who enjoyed the complete confidence of the troops. I could only reply that, if His Majesty wished it, I would submit his question to your Lordship.

Mr. Reade happening to arrive from Rustchuk at the time this request was made to me, I spoke to him on the subject. He told me that he had himself intended to bring to my notice the bad effect which Shefket Pasha's removal from Bulgaria on my demand had produced upon the troops, and his impression that his appointment to a command there would have a wonderful effect upon them, as they had the greatest confidence in him. I requested Mr. Reade to write me a letter on the subject, which he has done. I have the honour to inclose copy of it.

I have since received your Lordship's telegram dated to-day, in which your Lordship states that, although Her Majesty's Government have no right to dictate to the Turkish Government what officers it should employ, they cannot be expected, after what has passed, to acquiesce in the appointment of Shefket Pasha. I will communicate at once to Mahmoud Damat Pasha your Lordship's decision.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 458.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Varna, July 14, 1877.

Sir,

I DEEM it my duty to inform your Excellency that from what was said to me and to others in my presence by Turkish officers and privates at Rustchuk respecting Shefket Pasha, it is my opinion that his appointment to the command there would have a very great and favourable effect on the whole division, they, apparently, having very great confidence in him, which they do not seem to have in their present commanders.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

No. 459.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 798.) *Therapia, July 18, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN a despatch dated the 13th instant, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sulina reports that the Russians have sunk six ships, loaded with stones, at St. George's Chattal, River Danube, forty-five miles from Sulina, thereby completely blocking up the channel.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 460.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 799.)

My Lord, *Therapia, July 18, 1877.*

SEVERAL telegrams and reports from our Consular Agents in various parts of Roumelia, which I have transmitted to your Lordship, state that the Russians and Bulgarians are accused of committing great outrages upon the Mussulman population, and that they have massacred fugitive men, women, and children, and burnt a number of Mahommedan villages. As these statements come from Consuls Blunt and Reade, and from Vice-Consuls Sankey, Brophy, Dupuis, and Calvert, and appear to be confirmed by Colonel Lennox, it can scarcely be doubted that there is truth in them, although, as is usually the case, they may be exaggerated. I have endeavoured to obtain trustworthy information with regard to them, but this is not easy to do, as the Russians would probably not give the same facilities for inquiries on the spot as the Turks did in the case of the Bulgarian atrocities of last year. I have spoken to one or two Bulgarian notables and persons well acquainted with Bulgaria on the subject. They do not attempt to deny that shocking outrages have been committed on the Mussulman population, but they are disposed to attribute them mainly to the Bulgarian refugees, who were the agents of the Russian societies in inciting the Bulgarian insurrection last year, and to Bulgarians from Wallachia, who, with the former, have formed themselves, it is stated, into regiments or bands, styling themselves the "avengers," and accompany the Russian army. The Cossacks are also accused of being present at these outrages, and even of taking part in them.

The Turks in general have a profound conviction that the Russian authorities are inciting the Bulgarian Christians to exterminate the Mahommedan population in Bulgaria, either by massacres or by driving the Mussulmans out of the country. Your Lordship will no doubt have received copies of the Circulars on this subject which have been addressed by the Porte to its Representatives abroad. The Sultan and his Ministers, and many others, fear that this conviction, and the reports of the cruelties said to have been perpetrated by the Russians and Bulgarians, may lead to acts of retaliation and revenge on the part of the Mussulmans. Mr. Long, well known for his philanthrophic labours amongst the Bulgarians, who arrived here two days ago from Bazardjik, informs me that the Mussulmans of that district are beginning to be much excited against the Christians by the rumours that reach them of the massacres of their brethren, and that he is apprehensive of the result. However, as yet the Turkish authorities are doing their best to repress any spirit of revenge on the part of the Mahommedans, and, to give the Porte its due, it appears to be taking such measures as are in its power to protect the Christians. The Turkish newspapers have not been allowed to publish the accounts of "Russian atrocities" that have been received in Constantinople, in order to prevent the excitement they would produce against the Christians. I am further assured by the Sultan himself that the strictest orders have been sent to the authorities and notables in the provinces to encourage a friendly feeling between Mahommedans and Christians, and to repress at once any disposition on the part of the former to ill-treat the Bulgarians.

The perfect calm with which the Mahommedan population of Constantinople has hitherto received the accounts of the Russian passage of the Danube and advance upon Adrianople is very remarkable. At present, as far as I can learn, the only feeling among them is one of deep irritation against the Ministers, who are believed to have been the cause of the Russian invasion, and against the Commander-in-chief and Generals of the Turkish army in Europe, who have allowed the Russian enemy to occupy Bulgaria without opposition.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 461.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 24.)

(No. 801.)
Therapia, July 18, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Eldridge, relative to the question of the subsidy awarded by the Porte to the Administration of Mount Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 461.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Aleih, July 4, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 15th ultimo, informing me that the question of the subsidy awarded by the Porte to the Administration of Mount Lebanon is still before the Council of Ministers, but that there seems little hope of its being satisfactorily settled for want of money.

I learn, however, that information has been received by the Government of the Mountain to the effect that orders have been sent (to pay the amount of the subsidy) to the Custom-house of Beyrout, which, however, do not appear, so far as I can ascertain, to have been received by that establishment, the revenues of which have greatly fallen off during the last few months, owing to the stagnation of commerce in Syria, caused by political events, while I am told the assignments on the Custom-house by the Government already amount to 90,000*l.* Turkish, on account of the expenses of the Hadge and the enrolment and transport of troops, so that there are but faint hopes of the Administration of the Lebanon receiving the money for some time to come.

In any case, however, the order said to be given will establish the principle that the subsidy is recognized by the Imperial Government as due to the Lebanon, and if not paid at the present moment of difficulties will no doubt be made good when circumstances are more favourable to Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 462.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 25.)

(No. 802.)
Therapia, July 18, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a telegram which has just reached me from Vice-Consul Calvert, reporting an attempt to escape which was made yesterday evening by the prisoners who are confined in the gaol at Philippopolis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 462.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Mr. Layard.

Philippopolis, July 17, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

ATTEMPT was made yesterday evening by the Turkish and Bulgarian prisoners to escape from the gaol here. The prisoners to the number of about 400 succeeded in getting out of prison, but, with prompt assistance of police and military, were all recaptured, with exception of four. Among the latter is Alish Pehlivan; his escape seems to have been preconcerted, as a Pomak friend of his is reported to have been waiting for him in the outskirts of the town with arms and a horse, on which Alish mounted and fled. Mutessarif has telegraphed to Bazardjik to have him stopped if possible. In the attempt to escape and subsequent scuffle with the police several of prisoners and one zaptieh were wounded.

No. 463.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 25.)

(No. 803.)
Therapia, July 18, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the inclosed reports which I have received from Colonel Lennox, and copy of a private letter which has been addressed to me by Lieutenant Chermside.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—I also inclose a report from Sir C. Dickson on the military situation in Europe and Asia.

A. H. L.

Inclosure 1 in No. 463.

Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, R.E., to Mr. Layard.

Shumla, July 13, 1877.

Sir,

IN my letter of June 18 last, I gave some particulars about the difficulties that were thrown in my way by the Turkish authorities up to the evening of that day.

I regret that owing to circumstances that have since occurred I feel compelled to give details of the mode of treatment adopted towards me since then.

At Nicopolis on the 20th ultimo, the Commandant (Deli Hassan Pasha) sent down to say he would like to see me; I was out at the time and did not return till late, and in the afternoon I went up to the fortress but was again refused admittance, even after I explained that I was going to visit the Pasha at his own request; on being refused admittance I declined to wait at the gate and returned home. I was the next day begged by the Commandant to pay him another visit, but having been treated three times discourteously, I declined, and would not go again until I went to pay a farewell visit, and then I insisted upon an officer being sent down to conduct me up.

I see that I omitted in the postcript to my letter of the 18th ultimo to mention that the order to stop my entry into the fortress did not apply to anyone else; Bulgarians, Greeks, Jews, &c., were freely admitted at that time, and it was only the British Military Attaché who was refused admission. Besides the Staff, &c., civilian Turks reside in the fortress (no Bulgarians, I believe,) and the telegraph station is in it. During the time I remained at Nicopolis, viz., up to the morning of the 27th ultimo, I was refused admittance to the fortress and all forts and batteries, though I did manage to get into one open battery during the day of the 26th ultimo.

On the 27th ultimo I left Nicopolis, slept at Bjela that night, at Rustchuk on the 28th, at Varna on the 29th ultimo to the 2nd instant, at Shumla on the 2nd, at Tchernavoda on the 3rd; on that day I had seen the Serdar and told him that I was off to Tchernavoda and Bjela, to which he made no objection. On arrival I heard that all the Turkish troops had been withdrawn into Rustchuk; I was, therefore, unable to carry out my original plan, and on the 4th went to Rasgrad to see Muchir Achmed Eyoub, the Commander of the army of the Danube, and ask permission to go with his force, which was on the march from Shumla. There was only one tent in the camp and the Muchir kept me in the sun outside for two hours before he spoke to me; he was not busy during that time, for I could see while lying on the ground all that happened in the tent, the walls of which were tied up; he was lying down part of the time, he then took a walk, after which he had two officers in to breakfast with him, then he lolled about for a time, after which he got up and came outside his tent smoking his cigarette; he stared round the sky, and then casually looked to where I was and came towards me. He asked what I wanted; I said I found the troops had been withdrawn from Bjela and that I wanted to come with him. He said he would not accept me without a special order from the Serdar Ekrem. I reminded him that I was the bearer of a letter from the Seraskier to the Serdar Ekrem, and that when the Serdar had read it, he had handed it over to him (Achmed Eyoub) to read. He declined to accept me, and said I could telegraph to the Serdar. He then turned sharply away without making the customary salutation.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

I returned to the Rasgrad Railway Station and telegraphed from thence to the Serdar at Shumla. The telegram reached that place in due course, for the officials there telegraphed back to say that the operator had not counted the words correctly; but after the lapse of half an hour or so, a reply came to the operator at Rasgrad to say that as the telegram was in French it must be cancelled.

I ought to have mentioned that when Achmed Eyoub's Staff saw how he had treated us, they followed his example, and did not rise to wish us good-bye.

On the 5th I sent Lieutenant Chermside to Shumla with the telegrams I had been unable to send, and for the purpose of getting the permission Achmed Eyoub considered necessary; he remained there till the 8th, when being assured by the Political Officer (Tefik Bey) of the Serdar that the permission had been telegraphed to me, he returned to Tchernavoda, where he rejoined me on the 9th. As no telegram from the Serdar had reached me by about noon on the 9th, I telegraphed to the Serdar to inform him that I had not received the telegram I was informed he had sent me.

Rumours reached Tchernavoda of engagements between the Turks and Russians, and although I had not received any telegram from the Serdar, I went on the 11th to Achmed Eyoub's head-quarters near Terstenik. I informed him that I had arrived, and after a while he sent for Assiz Pasha (he talks French while Achmed Eyoub only talks Turkish); I told Assiz Pasha that I did not wish to disturb the Muchir, but that Lieutenant Chermside had been officially told that the Serdar Ekrem had telegraphed to me that I had permission to go with the Muchir's force; I said that I had not yet received the Serdar's telegram, and that I had telegraphed to him to say so; I informed him that the telegram that had been sent by the Serdar was said to be identic to the one sent to and presented to the Muchir by the French Military Attaché. Assiz Pasha brought me back the following reply, which I took down in writing: "Allez à Rustchuk et avertir de là quand vous recevriez la dépêche que le Serdar dit qu'il a envoyée pour vous." I replied that I had already ridden upwards of 20 kilomètres, and I begged that the Muchir would telegraph himself to the Serdar; and I also requested that the Muchir Achmed Eyoub would give me a personal interview. The reply I got from the Muchir was that he had given me my answer. I, consequently, had no course open to me but to return to Tchernavoda, having had a march, bag and baggage, of 31 miles that day.

I omitted to mention that on my first arrival at Nicopolis I was allowed to telegraph, but that Achmed Eyoub desired the telegraph authorities not to take my telegrams unless I had a special order from the Serdar. I managed to overcome this difficulty by showing the Seraskier's letter to the telegraph employé who came to me; he was satisfied with it, though, of course, Achmed Eyoub had not intended him to take that letter as an authority.

After Achmed Eyoub's behaviour to me at Nikopoli, at Rasgrad, and again at Terstenik, I decided to abandon the idea of going with his force, and I returned to Shumla yesterday, leaving Lieutenant Chermside to come back by route march with the horses, &c.

On the 9th when I telegraphed to the Serdar, I requested him to give me a written permission that I might show to the telegraph officials, saying I was authorized to telegraph in cypher, and when possible in French or English, and to this I received a reply on the evening of the 11th that as there was not at Rustchuk an employé for the international service, my telegrams in cypher or European languages must be transmitted by the office at Shumla. Of course this was only a put off, as any employé can transmit a cyphered telegram in figures.

I reached Shumla yesterday afternoon, and at once wrote out a telegram to you, which I took to Tefik Bey, who signed it, and I sent it to the telegraph office, who returned it to me to say that they had received new orders saying that my cyphered telegrams must be visèd by the Serdar Ekrem; this morning I sent it out to the Serdar by Tefik Bey, who has just brought it back saying that the Serdar and the Seraskier hope I will not send it, and that they will give me written orders which will obviate any future difficulties.

I however inclose the telegram, and will telegraph to you if I really do obtain satisfactory papers from the authorities to all Pashas and officials.

I hope to have an opportunity of sending this letter off so as to go by the mail from Varna to-morrow.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM LENNOX, *Colonel, R.E.,*
Military Attaché.

Inclosure 2 in No. 463.

Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, R.E., to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Shumla, July* 13, 1877.

WHEN at Muchir, Achmed Eyoub's head-quarters near Terstenik on the 11th instant, I was informed that there had been an affair between the cavalry and artillery of the two armies on Sunday the 8th between Obertenik and Bjela; it was not a serious affair; the wounded reached Rustchuk on the afternoon of the 9th.

On the night of the 9th there was a severe storm with very heavy rain, most of the Turkish troops near Terstenik were bivouacked, but such tents as were there were blown down. During the storm about 230 horses broke loose from the Russian lines and were secured by the Circassians; they belonged to a dragoon regiment; they have been distributed among the artillery I understand.

I was informed that a Turkish woman with a child on her breast had been found both murdered by the Russian troops; in corroboration I was told that the body of a Cossack had been found near the place.

As there were rumours that fighting was going on during the 9th and 10th, I will state that after the affair of the 8th, there was nothing until noon on the 11th, when I left the headquarters.

I did not see any Russians on the 11th, but I was informed that the outposts of the two armies were in sight of each other; I was told that there was no Russian infantry on the right bank of the Yantra, and that the bridge over that river at Bjela had been destroyed by the Russians.

The force under Achmed Eyoub Pasha was said to amount to 32 battalions, 11 field batteries, 30 squadrons of regular cavalry, besides 8 of Zebeks, and the Circassians. There was said to be a brigade at Pyrgos, but it is doubtful whether it was included in the 32 battalions or not. Fuad Pasha commands the cavalry, Muchir Eshref Pasha with the Rustchuk troops was in first line, and Assiz Pasha's division in the second line.

The above information I gathered from various sources, but none of it came from Pashas.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM LENNOX, *Colonel, R.E.,*
Military Attaché.

Inclosure 3 in No. 463.

Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, R.E., to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Shumla, July* 13, 1877.

IN my letter of 15th May last, I gave a list of the Danube flotilla, and I now give the stations, according to the latest information.

Armour-plated.

1.	"Hyfiz-ul-Rahman"	..	..	Sulina.
2.	"Heyher"	..	..	Rustchuk.
3.	"Semendria"	..	..	Silistria.
4.	"Fethul-Islam"	..	..	Silistria.
5.	"Benghar-Delen"	..	..	Nicopolis.
6.	"Podgoritza"	..	..	Widin.
7.	"Scodra"	..	..	Nicopolis.

The "Lufti-Djelad" and the "Seifi" have been blown up. I am assured that these are the only two that have been blown up, though I see the newspapers mention that three have been.

The "Benghar-Delen" and the "Scodra" were, I understand, rendered unserviceable by the Russian fire on the 10th instant while lying in the Osma River, where they were when I visited them on the 26th ultimo.

Wooden Gun-boats.

1.	"Varna" ..	..	..	Widdin.
2.	"Sulina" ..	..	..	Nicopolis.
3.	"Chefket Numa"	..	..	Nicopolis.
4.	"Akia" ..	..	..	Totrokan.

Transports.

1. "Arcadi"	..	..	..	Silistria.
2. "Clich Ali"	..	..	..	Silistria.
3. "Chay Reddin"	..	..	..	Rustchuk.
4. "Eslahat"	..	..	..	Widdin.
5. "Rustchuk"	..	..	..	Widdin.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM LENNOX, *Colonel, R.E.,*
Military Attaché.

Inclosure 4 in No. 463.

Lieutenant Chermside, R.E., to Mr. Layard.

(Private.) *Shumla, July 7, 1877.*

Dear Mr. Layard,

COLONEL LENNOX is at Tchernavoda, near Rustchuk. The cypher telegram sent off yesterday will explain my presence here, the object of which is to try and arrange matters. I am in hopes that Tefik Bey, the Diplomatic Agent, will use all his influence, and that I may have sufficient tact to arrange matters.

As regards your telegram of July 5, about the force at Widdin, there were, until lately, in the Widdin command 55 (or 50 ?) battalions, 6 squadrons, and 11 batteries; but this force has been considerably diminished, troops moving eastward about a fortnight ago. The dispositions were, according to the most reliable information I can give you—

	Battalions.
Camp near Widdin	.. 12
At Gartsko, on road Adlié	.. 3
" Bellarada	.. 2
" Adlié	.. 6
" Florentin	.. 6
" Akshar	.. 1
In neighbourhood	.. ?
Battalions	30 to 34

This gives 30 to 34 battalions, 1 regiment of cavalry, and 5 or 7 batteries near Widdin.

The forces that moved eastward were distributed as follows:—

	Battalions.	Batteries.
Lom Palanka	.. 3	.. —
Rahova	.. 6	.. 3
Beshlikoi and Gigen	.. 6	.. 2*
Nicopoli	.. 5	.. —

Provisions.—As regards these my information is given me by an Englishman lately at Widdin, whose statements also confirmed the above approximate number of troops. The troops are said to have been suffering from the effects of bad provisions, mouldy biscuits, dried, and with a small proportion of flour being issued. It is said this was only done to use up this bad stock. The town, I am assured, is very well provisioned, the Government granaries being full, and new additional granaries (four ?) have been built near the konak (on the river front), which are also full. These granaries, as the stores in almost all the Turkish fortresses, are exposed to be burnt by an enemy's fire. The store of provisions is mostly in unground grain; there is a supply of small horse-mills. The neighbouring country does not appear denuded of cattle, which are plentiful. Though I have not a personal knowledge of the fortress, I am inclined to believe it well provisioned.

A *ci-devant* English officer tells me that there is no apparent want of horses, and that he has seen as many as either three or four field-batteries together, so he ought to be able to judge. He seems to like the appearance of the horses, which, at Widdin, are easily procured from Hungary, and are very fine animals, the whole teams, not wheelers alone, being composed of these horses; and he considers the batteries at Widdin are the best horsed of any he has seen. As he also mentioned to me military waggons (a very rare thing in Turkey, where arabas, or pack animals, are the usual means of transport), with teams of six horses each, I think that though these horses are likely enough artillery horses,

* Probably from Widdin.

the evidence is in favour of no pressing scarcity of horses for artillery purposes; but animals are scarce however.

The Krupp guns at Widdin are said to be twenty-three in number, five being of 15 centim., eight of 12 centim., and ten of 9 centim. About ammunition I know nothing recent, but I suppose there cannot be more than 500 rounds per gun, and probably about half that number. The larger number might probably not suffice for a protracted siege.

The enemy, who, on this part of the line, are Roumanians, show at various points up and down stream, especially at Aitadi, nearly opposite Florentin; these seem to be continual and unmeaning demonstrations. Batteries are numerous; the principal ones are six, if not more, at various heights above the water at Kalafat, and their armament was at first forty or fifty field-pieces, but latterly there have not been more than fifteen or twenty guns, some of which are of large calibre as 15 centim. There is one battery low down behind the islands, in which is a 15-centim. gun. It is said to be only 1,500 mètres from the Turkish shore, and opposite the konak and steam-mill.

The land defence works are said to be complete. There is probably the same absence of bomb-proof cover as elsewhere.

Osman Pasha's force is very highly spoken of as regards its discipline and efficiency, &c, in which points it surpasses the troops here and at Rustchuk, &c.

As regards the Dobrudja, it is almost impossible to obtain reliable information, and nothing seems known. The occupation of the Upper Dobrudja, in order to protect the weak and assailable point of the Russian communications near Braila, is an obvious, I may almost say, necessity for them. Of course they may rest content with such occupation. As far as I know, the facts are these:—About June 22 the Russians crossed near Matchin, Pothashi being long since deserted and undefended; they met with scarcely any opposition, and spread their forces over the country, crossing also near Hirsova, Isakteha, and Toulteha. At any rate, they now occupy all the old fortresses above named. They are said not yet to have constructed a bridge. Their numbers are estimated at 20,000 to 25,000.

The Turkish forces in the Dobrudja until lately consisted of eight or nine battalions, one-and-a-half batteries, and a squadron or two of regular cavalry (doubtful if present). These were reinforced from Varna by three battalions of infantry and possibly by some artillery. Redoubts were thrown up at Kustendji. A few guns for their armament arrived, were disembarked, and then re-embarked. On Sunday, 1st, I heard at Varna that the three battalions were expected back. The Turkish resistance has been apparently nil; 1,500 men it is said retired on Tchernavoda, and thence to Silistria. The bulk of the Turkish forces, about six to eight battalions, with about four guns, have concentrated at Medjidie. At Kustendji there are two or three battalions (1,500 men), and these are to embark there. The accounts about the movements of all these troops are conflicting, but at any rate they seem likely to retire. I hear that the Russian outposts are within two hours of Medjidie and five hours of Kustendji; they are also said to be entrenching themselves (Russians) at Babadagh, using Bulgarian labour. The Mussulman population are quitting the Upper Dobrudja, and crowd the road leading to Bazardjik. At Bazardjik there are no Turkish troops. It is said to be a strong topographical, as well as a strategical, point. With the exception of one slight skirmish, the Turks seem to have abandoned the Dobrudja without striking a blow. I hope the "Rapid" or some one sends you better information than I can. As rafts are the best means of transporting heavy guns, as there are such at Braila, it is quite possible that the Russians (who are masters of the river) are preparing to move on Varna, about which I have spoken and written to you before; but their operations are so slow, and the weight of their long line of communications seems to hang on them so already, that such a move seems as yet only among shadowy possibilities and one I cannot judge of.

As regards Rustchuk, the bombardment began on Sunday, 24th, and has continued at intervals for nine days out of thirteen up to present date, except on one occasion, when the Turks took the initiative. The Russians generally fire in the afternoon, their fire lasting seven hours. The Russian batteries are numerous, extending east from Slobosia to near Giurgevo, and their armaments consist of 15 centim. and 18 centim., and, it is said, some of 21 centim.; and if so, the latter are probably mortars or Howitzers.

The Russian fire has been directed principally on the public buildings, the Consulates, the Turkish quarter, the konak, as far as the Lom. There have been a few shots fired on the battery just east of the railway station (Said Pasha Tabia). The railway station and its workshops, &c., have not been fired on. The damage is almost entirely confined to the Turkish quarter. The hospitals suffered severely, the konak was a complete wreck, the Islahané hit in several places, and both the other two hospitals I saw slightly damaged. The

kounk and the Istahané have since been burnt down, it is said, by incendiaries. The bombardment seems to have produced a very demoralizing effect at first; and had it been possible to strike from the land side, Rustchuk might possibly have fallen at once. Now the general exodus that has been its result is favourable to the Turks. The town appears almost deserted; the Bulgarians remained, but were turned out by Bashi-Bazouks a few days since. Their houses have, I believe, since been pillaged, as, for want of transport, they could not remove many things. They camp out in the day, and return out at night. Many of the Mussulmans have gone, but numbers remain camping in the vineyards. The steam-mills have both been hit; one remains unhurt, the other has sustained damages to its machinery. The stores from the granaries, reported unsafe as regards situation, have been removed and placed in the ditch of the enciente, south-east of town. Little damage has been done to works or guns by Russian fire.

Bjela was evacuated on the 30th June, there being fourteen battalions on the front line, and Mushir Eshref Pasha's force of ten or twelve battalions, along the line from Metahka to Terstenik, in support. All the forces fell back on Rustchuk; and on the 3rd, when last there, the outposts of regulars were not, I think, six miles from the town.

On Saturday, 30th, seven battalions and one battery marched from Shumla on Tirnova. On Sunday, July 1, six battalions, forming the complement of Safvet Pasha's division, also left.

On Tuesday, 3rd, Assiz Pasha's division, of strength already given (sixteen battalions, five batteries, two squadrons), left, accompanied by Ahmed Eyoob. This division was joined by the six battalions that left on Sunday. The cavalry division left on 3rd also, and reached Rasgrad in nine or ten hours. On the 4th the cavalry left early; Ahmed Eyoob and staff in the afternoon. The infantry were to follow as soon as possible, the march to be on Rustchuk. It is hard to say what the movement may mean, the Turks having abandoned the line of the Yantra, and may desire to reoccupy it. What the march to Rustchuk may mean I do not know. There are said to be cross-country roads from Rasgrad to Bjela; and if so, the troops may have gone that way. It is possible the Turks mean to attack from Tirnova, Nicopoli, and Bjela.* If so, unless the co-operation be very perfect, unless the numbers be superior, and unless they are fit to cope with the Russians in open field, it is a dangerous movement for three separate forces to attack the point of a long weak frontier, presumably pierced by a concentrated force. The Bjela position is a defensive one, and does not present great advantages as an offensive one, the bridge, from its length and height, partaking of the nature of a defile, and magnificent rear-guard position, as it would be hard to bring back a beaten army across it. The Tirnova and Nicopoli forces appear to me too insignificant to be considered as converging forces falling on and crushing an enemy; but of course all depends on the Russian numbers, and the Turks have possibly good information. I am afraid if they take the open they will do it with their line of retreat in the wrong direction, that is, suppose Ahmed Eyoob to attack with fifty battalions, about the most he could, unless the Tirnova force moves up. If he moves by the Rustchuk-Bjela chaussée, if his army be beaten, and his left turned, he will be lucky if he is not forced back on Rustchuk. An attack from the Tirnova side, or a defence against advance, would appear to be sounder, and then, of course, the holding by the Rustchuk force of the Yantra, on the Russian flank, would be a demonstration that might have a very good effect.†

From the movements we know of, and distribution of our force here, there would be about twelve battalions and one or two batteries, and it is thought a little cavalry. Any increment must come from across the Balkans, and there have been for some time troops mustering in the Adrianople vilayet. There were said to be twenty-two battalions at Tirnova. There must be nearly twelve; and if ten have come over the mountains, there will be twenty-two. Of course you will see battalions are moved here and there, without regard to divisions, or often, I think, brigades.

I am sorry my information is scanty and vague, but really when I tell you that none of the above comes in any way through Turkish official sources, and that we are confessedly beholden to the courtesy of individuals, or dependent upon the same hearsay sources for information as correspondents, or on personal observations, you will see it is hard to furnish better. All numbers, &c., are given from memory, Colonel Lennox having all records, previous letters, &c.; so there may be inaccuracies.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

P.S.—I have written with a carriage waiting, but fear I miss the post.

* As regards the Russians I think their movements are open to criticism; a point of such possible importance to the Turks as Bjela might well have been occupied after evacuation. Their cavalry never got track of the Turkish forces at all, and the constant falling back of their patrols must indicate, I think, fear of the Circassians, so that they are probably at night always near strong bodies. There must be a great slowness, and the Turks have had a great chance.

† As regards the Yantra, I am inclined to think that if a direct advance form part of the Russian plan, it may prove of far more assistance as a protection to their left than of hindrance as an obstacle, were they to force its line.

Inclosure 5 in No. 463.

Lieutenant-General Sir C. Dickson to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Therapia, July 18, 1877.*

OWING to Colonel Lennox having had great difficulty in getting permission to follow the movements of the Turkish troops or to telegraph in cypher, no reports or telegrams of any importance relating to the movements of the army in Bulgaria have been received by your Excellency during the past week. The latest information I have obtained from an official source about the movements of the hostile armies was that the head-quarters of Ahmed Eyoub Pasha were at Osman Bazar, and the Turkish army under his orders was holding the country between the Yantra and the Lom Rivers, from Pyrgos, on the Danube, and Terstenik up to Osman Bazar. I cannot speak with certainty, but I should imagine the strength of Ahmed Eyoub's forces to amount to between 60,000 and 70,000 men; and in order to bring them up to this strength the fortresses of Rustchuk, Silistria, and Varna are left with just sufficient garrisons for their defence; thus at Rustchuk there are about nine battalions, Silistria twelve or fourteen, and at Varna the Egyptian division of twelve battalions and four Turkish ones. At Shumla and Pravadi there are about fourteen battalions under the Serdar Ekrem, who conducts the general operations from Shumla. The Turkish corps d'armée, under Osman Pasha, of Widdin, appears to have its head-quarters at Orchanie, covering Sofia, with its left extended towards Plevna, and I believe occupying that town. Osman Pasha may have about forty-five battalions, or about 30,000 to 35,000 men, under his command, with a very fair proportion of field artillery, but little or no cavalry. His corps is said to be in excellent order and discipline, and his field artillery is very good indeed, and the guns are exceedingly well horsed. About 8,000 men have been left in garrison at Widdin. Forty battalions (about 22,000 men) are expected at Sofia in a few days from Podgoritza, from whence they are now on the march; and this reinforcement of good troops will when united to Osman Pasha's forces, form a formidable army to operate on the Russian right. I hear that Mushir Mehemet Ali Pasha, from Montenegro, is already at Sofia to assume command of this corps on its arrival.

Of the Russian movements very little is known; their head-quarters are at Sistova, and their forces are occupying the country between that place, Selvi, and Tirnova, and a portion of their left column had passed the Balkans at Hain Boghaz and other small passes midway between Slivno and Shipka Passes and had descended into Roumelia, whilst their right column was said to be at Etropol, near Orchanie, the head-quarters of Osman Pasha. No engagement has yet been reported, though there are doubtful rumours of such having taken place. From the Dobrudja I hear that the Russians are in possession of Tchernavoda and Medjidieh, the Turkish troops there having retired, after a slight action, upon Silistria and Varna. Kustendjie has not yet been abandoned by the Turks, but I believe they have given up all intention of defending it, and the small garrison is prepared to embark on the approach of the Russians.*

The Russian troops having passed the Balkans, as above stated, entered the districts of Yeni-Zara, Eski-Zara, and Kezanlik, though they have never entered these towns, or got to the railway station at Yamboli, though the railway was damaged by the Circassians to prevent the Russians using it, but it has since been repaired. From what I now hear, the villages and towns were deserted on the approach of the Russians, but no acts of destruction are said to have been committed by them, but the Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians are said to have burned some of the villages thus deserted to prevent the Russians from occupying them.

The Russian force that has entered Roumelia is said to consist of 8,000 men; there was some cavalry, and, if any artillery, I conclude some mountain guns accompanied them. On the 14th instant a battalion of Turkish infantry held the road, about one hour's march from Yeni-Zara, against the Russians for some time, and retreated from want of ammunition. Raouf Pasha was at Islimieh watching the Slivno Pass, and a portion of his force

* I have just heard that Kustenji has been abandoned by the Turks.

was at the Shipka Pass, but the Russians crossed between the two passes. Raouf Pasha succeeded in collecting enough forces to enable him to engage the enemy between Islimieh and Yeni-Zara on Sunday 15th instant, and since then he has been engaged, up to yesterday, near Kezanlik also, and, it is said, with success, driving the Russians back towards the mountains, but no certain news are yet known.

The corps of Suleiman Pasha, of forty battalions, is expected at Dédé Aghatch to-morrow or Friday, and will proceed at once by rail to Adrianople. At present there are in the Vilayet of Adrianople about 24,000 or 25,000 men, of whom 18,000, with two field batteries, were sent from Constantinople during this month. Between the 14th and 17th instant 5,000 men have been sent to Adrianople.

Constantinople is at present quite denuded of troops as regards its own defence; there are about 15,000 men of all arms in and about the capital, including 3,500 zaptiehs, mounted and dismounted, and only one battalion of infantry out of thirteen in Constantinople is a regular one; the rest are Mustafiz; and there are only two squadrons of regular cavalry.

From Asia no news have arrived, except that Ahmed Moukhtar Pasha is in Kars and the Russian army occupies the same position as described in my last letter; it is on the road between Kars and Alexandropol. The Russians gained an advantage at Bayazid by fighting the Turkish division there and causing it to fall back with the loss of three guns; and the Russian garrison so long besieged in Bayazid was relieved and left the place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DICKSON, *Lieutenant-General,*
Military Attaché.

No. 464.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 804. Secret.)
Therapia, July 18, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a despatch from Sir C. Dickson, covering copies of reports addressed to me by Captain Fife, Military Attaché to this Embassy, on the subject of the Lines of Bulair, on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

Captain Fife returned yesterday from Gallipoli, and will proceed immediately to Adrianople to report to me on the military position in Roumelia, and the movements of the Russians in that quarter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 464.

Lieutenant-General Sir C. Dickson to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)
Therapia, July 17, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE perused the three Reports from Captain Fife, which he addressed to your Excellency, dated 10th, 11th, and 14th July, from Gallipoli, on the subject of the Lines at Bulair, and I beg to inform you that I concur entirely with this officer in the views entertained by him for the restoration of the old lines of defence, and for the proposed advanced works in their front. A sketch of the position—or rather, a tracing of it, accompanies Captain Fife's Reports, and the manner in which this sketch is to be applied is explained in Report of 14th instant.

I beg to observe that the recommendations made by Captain Fife, and by Bluhm Pasha and myself, agree in the main with the plan proposed by Colonel Home, with this exception, viz.: that Captain Fife proposes to place an additional work about 1,000 yards in front of Fort Sultan on the central ridge, whilst Bluhm Pasha proposes, besides this work, to place another on the hill at Bulair village about 2,000 yards further in advance. As I propose in the course of a few days to proceed to Gallipoli to inspect the ground, I will carefully examine as to the necessity for this latter work, and will advise accordingly on my return. I also beg to forward a copy of a communication from Bluhm Pasha, explaining his views, and the urgent necessity for proceeding with the execution of these lines without delay, and also the absence of labour and skilled supervision. I have reason to believe that these works will be commenced in about a week or ten days from this date,

when a sufficient number of labourers can be procured from the districts in the neighbourhood of the Dardanelles.

The proposal made by Captain Fife in his Report of the 14th instant, of gradually forming a second line of works about 1½ to 2 miles in rear of the first, after the completion and occupation of the latter, is a very useful and necessary measure, and this could be effected by the troops, should time and opportunity permit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DICKSON, *Lieutenant-General,*
Military Attaché.

Inclosure 2 in No. 464.

Captain Fife to Mr. Layard.

Sir,
Gallipoli, July 10, 1876.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I visited the Bulair lines yesterday and to-day; as yet no work has been commenced, nor has the order been received by the Governor of Gallipoli to collect the necessary workmen.

I am informed by Mr. Odoni, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Gallipoli, that Bluhm Pasha considers that, in addition to repairing and improving the lines themselves, that detached works should be constructed about 1,000 metres to the front of them, to suit them to modern requirements; also that two intrenched camps should be formed behind the lines, one resting on the gulf of Saros and the other on the Sea of Marmora, to cover an embarkation on either side. However, in view of the scarcity of the available time and means, Bluhm Pasha has determined to recommend to the Turkish Government only the repair of the old lines themselves, which he computes will occupy 500 men for ten weeks or 1,000 for five weeks.

Owing to the harvest, the war, &c., labour is scarce at present, and the Governor of Gallipoli informs me he suggested that Bluhm Pasha should recommend in his Report that authority should be given to collect the necessary men in the adjacent districts, as well as in that of Gallipoli, and that in that case even more than 1,000 men could be obtained, while from the district of Gallipoli alone it would be difficult to collect 500.

The old lines are a combination of closed works occupying the most important points, and of trenches joining them; about two-thirds of the latter still give over 6 feet in height of shelter to the ground in rear, the remaining one-third, principally between Fort Sultan and Fort Napoleon on the left, would barely give cover by its ditch or parapet to a line of infantry skirmishers. Similarly, Fort Napoleon on the left is more dilapidated than Fort Sultan, which is the centre and key of the position, or Fort Victoria on the right.

I consider that Bluhm Pasha's view, that the repair of the old lines is the best way of hastily preparing the Peninsula for defence, is correct.

The larger number of men should be employed, and the time required be reduced to the lowest estimate.

In addition to this, as the defence of the ground mainly depends on the state of efficiency of the closed works, these should be attended to first, and every man employed on them for whom there is room to work.

The intervening trenches now give considerable cover, and if not completed when required could be made all that is desirable in a few days by the troops destined to occupy them working under skilled supervision.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. C. FIFE, *Captain,*
Military Attaché.

Inclosure 3 in No. 464.

Captain Fife to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.)
Gallipoli, July 8, 1877.

BEFORE I arrived to-day Bluhm Pasha left for Constantinople. He now only makes preliminary report. I will write fully.

Inclosure 4 in No. 464.

Captain Fife to Mr. Layard.

(Very Confidential.) *Gallipoli, July* 11, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to suggest to your Excellency that as the defence of the Bulaïr lines will depend principally upon the efficiency of the closed works occupying the important points of the position, and that as full explanations and detailed plans prepared by Colonel Home and officers assisting him last winter are now at your Excellency's disposal, in the book of Very Confidential Reports and Memoranda furnished by the Intelligence Department, that Bluhm Pasha should, if possible, be persuaded to adopt the views therein set forth, and that he should be then furnished with the plans and all the necessary details.

This would also comprise the formation of the proposed new advanced redoubts No. 1 and No. 2* in advance of the lines, which are necessary (especially No. 1) to fire into some ravines and hollows imperfectly defended by the main lines.

I have reason to know that Bluhm Pasha is fully alive to the paramount importance to England of the defence of the Gallipoli Peninsula, and it would consequently be more easy to gain his compliance without his feeling that any slight was being thrown on his own skill.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. C. FIFE, *Captain,*
Military Attaché.

Inclosure 5 in No. 464.

Captain Fife to Mr. Layard.

(Very Confidential.) *Gallipoli, July* 14, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to continue, for your Excellency's information, my Report on the Bulaïr lines, commenced in my letters dated 10th and 11th July, 1877, respectively.

I consider that to repair the old lines is the best way of utilizing available time and means, for the following reasons:—

1. The peninsula is narrowest at that point.

2. A comparatively small expenditure of labour and time will render the lines again efficient.

3. Vessels of war can co-operate on both flanks and act against the rear of the attack; to this an enemy not commanding the sea exposes himself by entering the peninsula.

4. A system of closed works joined by trenches is not unsuited to the probable character of the defence, or to the width of the front.

For the defenders to take position further in advance than the head of the Gulf of Saros, would be to expose their left flank to an attack from Adrianople; to risk being compelled to form front to a flank with the sea behind them; to give up the advantage of posting themselves where the enemy must, to attack, expose his flanks and rear, and might be completely cut off by a co-operating force of the defenders landing behind him; and themselves to incur the risk of being severed from the peninsula; to choose ground where scrub bushes and ravines would shelter attack, in preference to positions having smooth slopes easily swept by the defenders' fire, and utterly destitute of cover to assist an enemy's advance.

Just at the head of the Gulf of Saros, at Examili, is a position with a good field of fire; but it is extended and loses strength by not being further within the peninsula.

The position just in advance of the village of Bulaïr, with the small stream, the Soujouk, in its front, has a good field of fire; it should be held by light troops till the enemy's attack has developed itself.

With regard to the position of the Bulaïr lines, the next most striking feature to the great offensive and defensive power of the flanks, if the defenders command the sea, and to the narrowness of front, is the commanding ridge, which, traversing the middle of the peninsula, runs with more or less interruption far to the front and rear. The possession of this ridge is the chief point to look to. Fort Sultan occupies it where it intersects the

* Shown on the General Plan next to page 111.

position, and is consequently the most important point in the lines, which it commands, and takes in flank and reverse far towards either side.

The ground in front of the centre and right being most intersected by hollows, and having in front good positions for the enemy's artillery, they are the portions of the line most liable to attack, and have been provided with the strongest defences, including Fort Sultan and Fort Victoria; while the remaining portion of the lines, of equal extent, contains only Fort Napoleon.

But I consider Fort Sultan itself to be the most probable point of attack, for the following reasons:—

1. There are hollows in the ridge, especially on the left front of Fort Sultan, which would enable an enemy to open his trenches at a favourable distance.

2. Good positions are available for the guns of the attack.

3. Fort Sultan is the key of the position.

4. Being on the main road, also the junction of roads at the village of Bulaïr, would facilitate the bringing up of *matériel*, and the operation generally.

5. The enemy would best avoid the fire of the defenders' ships.

I deduce from this that here the defences should be increased, and I would propose that a new advanced redoubt should be constructed on the ridge at (F).* It would command the hollows just mentioned; have the support of Fort Sultan, but is so placed as not in the least to mask the fire of the latter. I would recommend the construction of this redoubt next after the two proposed by Colonel Home, and mentioned in my letter No. 2. This work would be of the same type, and an irregular quadrilateral in shape, one face giving direct fire along the ridge, the right, a short one, firing into the small hollow below, and assisting to flank Redoubt No. 1; the left, a longer face, firing into the deep ravines on that side; and the rear face being a gorge parapet.

One of the chief objections to a single line of works is that the loss of one makes a complete opening, which is not the case with a double line; and it is thus evident how greatly these advanced redoubts will increase the security of the position.

After the lines have been completed, I would recommend the formation of a work at the commanding point (G) on the ridge, in rear of the line. From this point, besides the ridge being enfiladed, the valley on the right can be seen down to the water's edge, and the ravines and undulating country on the left for miles. A similar work should be made in rear of the left at (H), and from it the remainder of the ravines, roads, and ground to the north edge of the peninsula are commanded. Some gun-pits and shelter trenches would be constructed to enfilade the north shore beneath the low cliffs, and the same on the south, on the hill (I), to enfilade the defile and road in front.

The few works I have just mentioned, viz.:—two redoubts and two sets of gun-pits and shelter trenches, would command the peninsula from shore to shore, and enfilade all the roads. Thus a second line would be formed which might be strengthened as time and resources permit. This is considering the existing line with its advanced redoubts as the first. The interval between the two lines is about a mile and a-half, and the second, not being under the enemy's fire during the attack on the first, its construction would not necessarily be prevented. Its weakest point is the right, where the hill J gives the nearest shelter to the enemy, but he would here be much exposed to the defender's ships.

Thus this line possesses, in my opinion, the following advantages:—

1. A very strong position.

2. It can be constructed by the troops when not otherwise employed.

3. The enemy cannot interrupt its construction.

4. A few works can command the whole breadth of the peninsula, and occupied by field artillery, would serve to rally the troops in case of need, or to cover a retreat or embarkation.

5. If it is developed into a powerful second line. When the enemy has arrived at the last stages of a long siege of the first line, he may be made to commence anew by the guns being gradually transferred to the second line, and the first then being suddenly abandoned and the principal works blown up.

6. The risk of disaster through the capture of a main work of the first line making an opening, would disappear.

The position of the first does not command that of the second line, but its lateral communications in rear are better screened from the defenders now holding the second

* By placing the accompanying tracing upon the general plan of the Bulaïr lines next page 111 in the book of Very Confidential Reports and Memoranda on Turkey in Europe, the various positions will be indicated by the letters.

line than are the lateral communications of the latter, which some short trenches between the ravines would improve however.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. C. FIFE, *Captain,*
Military Attaché.

Addendum.

I have just heard that the Turkish authorities are inclined to occupy the hill at Bulaïr village by an advanced work. To the advisability of this I am opposed for the following reasons :—

1. The enemy could approach the work under cover of slopes and hollows, unless it were supported by others, for the construction of which time and labour is not available.

2. The work would be isolated, as the ground prevents the main line and its advanced redoubts from giving it any efficient support. Thus it would expose the guns of the defence to be overpowered in detail.

3. Upon the inevitable fall of the work a moral as well as a material loss would be sustained.

(Signed) J. C. FIFE, *Captain, 65th Regiment,*
Military Attaché.

Constantinople, July 17, 1877.

Inclosure 6 in No. 464.

Memorandum by Bluhm Pasha on the Lines of Bulaïr.

(Confidentielle.)

EVIDEMMENT le Gouvernement Ottoman ne prend pour l'exécution accélérée de ces travaux de défense qu'un intérêt fort limité.

De plus, les exigences de la fortification d'Andrinople et celle de Buyuk-Tchekmedjé-Derkos ont presque absorbé déjà ses moyens disponibles.

Enfin, fut-ce qu'on puisse reunir à Boulaïr un suffisant nombre d'hommes, ce qui est très-douteux, encore les officiers du génie pour surveiller les travaux et pour les diriger à toute l'étendu du front de défense manqueraient pourtant.

On doit donc s'attendre à ce que le problème d'une exécution du rétablissement en court délai sera insoluble.

Vue cette éventualité, et pour faire face aux fatales conséquences qui, à l'autre cas, en pourraient résulter, j'ose à proposer qu'on doit insister près de Damad Mahmoud Pasha qu'on fasse, avant tout son possible, pour rétablir les parties de la ligne de défense (Boulaïre) qui sont les plus importantes puisqu'elles dominent les autres.

Conformément à ce principe je conseil qu'on doit faire mettre en état de défense, avant tout autre ouvrage, les deux forts dont l'un occupe le centre (Fort Sultan) et l'autre l'aile gauche de la position.

Alors la partie élevée de la ligne fortifiée à l'aile droite, qui en commande les approches de côté du front.

Ces travaux terminés, la construction du complex d'ouvrages devant occuper la chaîne de collines qui s'étend du fort au centre jusqu'au village de Boulaïre paraît d'être comparativement de la plus grande importance.

Pourraient être établis après un ouvrage avancé (détaché) devant l'aile droite et un autre devant l'aile gauche de la ligne.

Enfin de rétablir le reste de cette dernière serait alors possible encore même à l'heure suprême lorsque l'ennemi aurait déjà pris position en face de nos ouvrages avancés.

(Signé) BLUHM.

Pera, ce 15 *Juillet,* 1877.

No. 465.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 218. Political.)

My Lord, *Alexandria, July* 16, 1877.

IN confirmation of my despatch No. 214 of the 14th instant, I have the honour to report that five Egyptian transports left this port yesterday afternoon for Constantinople, having on board an Egyptian cavalry regiment of 800 men and 770 horses, 300 cases of powder, and provisions of grain and rice.

They are sailing without an escort, and they have private orders not to anchor in any part of the Dardanelles, nor to approach within two miles of the castles at the entrance to the port of Smyrna, for fear of the torpedoes that have been laid down there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 466.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 281.)

My Lord, *Siena, July* 22, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a paragraph from the "Italie" of this date, relative to the ambitious projects recently attributed to the Italian Government, especially by the Austrian press—the reported Russo-Italian alliance and military preparations—explaining the motives of the proposal made by the Italian Government in favour of Montenegro, and stating that the only interest of Italy in the Eastern question is that the present hostilities should cease as soon as posible, in order to avoid complication which, according to present appearances, however, appear for the moment to be averted.

This paragraph is perhaps worthy of the more attention as it has the appearance of official inspiration, and because the "Italie" for some time past has written as if it were the mouthpiece of the Italian Ministry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

Inclosure in No. 466.

Extract from the "Italie" of July 22, 1877.

LA presse Autrichienne, qui a parlé des projets d'intervention armée de l'Italie dans la question d'Orient, qui a annoncé l'occupation possible d'Antivari par des forces Italiennes, qui a révélé une alliance Russo-Italienne et des projets de prise de possession de l'Albanie par nos troupes, revient aujourd'hui sur ses révélations et convient que ses renseignements étaient inexacts.

Les journaux officieux Autrichiens ont les premiers, et sans attendre les démentis venus d'Italie, fait des déclarations en ce sens.

Nous pouvons dire, de notre côté, en réponse aux commentaires que l'on fait dans la presse étrangère, tantôt sur de prétendus achats de chevaux à l'étranger, tantôt sur le soi-disant rappel des officiers en congé ou sur l'envoi de l'escadre d'un port à un autre port, que l'Italie se trouve en ce moment exactement dans la même situation que les autres années à la même époque.

La politique étrangère a toujours été jusqu'ici inspirée par le désir constant de mettre fin le plus tôt possible aux calamités qu'entraîne la guerre ; mais jamais elle n'a marché isolée et toutes ses démarches ont prouvé qu'elle ne se séparait pas des Puissances qui ont pris part à la Conférence.

Dernièrement, elle a, comme le constate la "Correspondance Autrichienne," fait une proposition ayant pour but d'amener une démarche collective des Puissances en faveur des Monténégrins, qu'on croyait perdus. L'Italie n'agissait que dans un but purement humanitaire ; cependant les Puissances n'ayant pas cru devoir faire cette démarche, que les événements ont rendue d'ailleurs inutile, l'Italie s'est inclinée devant leur décision.

Il est donc bien entendu que l'Italie n'a dans la question d'Orient d'autre intérêt que celui de voir cesser le plus tôt possible les hostilités, afin d'éviter des complications qui semblent, du reste, pour le moment, et d'après les nouvelles arrivées aujourd'hui à Rome, devoir être écartées.

No. 467.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 25.*)

Constantinople, le 23 Juillet, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

UN télégramme du Gouverneur de Tirnova, adressé à son Altesse le Grand Vizir, confirme tous les actes de barbarie antérieurement signalés et commis par les Russes et les Bulgares lors de l'occupation de Tirnova et des villages environnants, et notamment l'incendi d'une mosquée où s'étaient réfugiés les habitants de Ciausi-keui qui ont été brûlés vifs. Il ajoute que les Russes obligent, sous menace de mort, les Musulmans prisonniers à tirer sur les troupes Ottomanes qui viennent à leur secours.

Le Muchir, Suleiman Pacha, télégraphie au Ministre de la Guerre que douze Musulmans non-armés du village de Soukoulou, près d'Eski-Zaghra, ayant fait leur soumission aux Russes, sept d'entre eux ont été massacrés à coups de hâche par les Bulgares, et trois autres par les Cosaques.

Nous avons fait relever aussi exactement que possible le nombre des habitations incendiées et des habitants Musulmans massacrés par les Russes et les Bulgares dans les villages qui ont jusqu'ici le plus souffert de l'invasion de l'ennemi, et je vous en transmets le résultat, ainsi qu'il suit :—

1. A Bauk, village exclusivement Musulman, du District de Sistow—		
Maisons		100
Habitants—		
Hommes		200
Femmes		300
Total des victimes		500

Habitants réputés survivants, 7.

2. A Balovan, village Musulman du District de Tirnova—		
Maisons		250
Habitants—		
Hommes		700
Femmes		1,200
En tout, victimes		1,900

Une seule personne, croit-on, a échappé au massacre.

3. A Carabounar—		
Maisons		100
Hommes		200
Femmes		300
Soit, victimes		500

Deux personnes ont échappé à la mort.

4. A Kestembol—		
Maisons		150
Hommes		300
Femmes		600
Soit, victimes		900

Trois survivants.

5. A Chems, village mixte—		
Maisons Musulmanes		60
Hommes		120
Femmes		200
Soit, victimes		320

Une seule personne a échappé.

6. A Tundja, village mixte—		
Maisons		100
Habitants—		
Hommes		250
Femmes		400
Soit, victimes		650

Trois survivants.

Voici l'indication du nombre des maisons incendiées dans les villages qui avaient été désertés par leurs habitants avant l'arrivée de l'ennemi :—

	Maisons.
Tranich Hoiri	40
Beran	150
Odular	180
Armoudlouk	80
Bourouch	100
Kodjina	70
Okdijler	200
Total des maisons incendiées	820

On signale encore 40 à 50 villages mixtes comptant chacun au minimum 100 maisons dont les habitants Musulmans se sont soumis aux Russes; mais on ignore leur sort.

Vous jugerez, comme nous, que cette effrayante statistique est le plus accablant des témoignages contre la cruauté impitoyable de la politique Russe.

No. 468.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 25.*)

Constantinople, le 24 Juillet, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

LE Gouvernement Général du Danube télégraphie de Roustchouk que, Dimanche dernier, des Russes et des Bulgares ont massacré tous les habitants du village de Yéni-keui, situé à huit heures d'Osman Bazar, à l'exception de trois femmes et de deux hommes. Au village de Kozli, à neuf heures de la même ville, ils ont mis à mort cinq personnes.

Un télégramme de Moukhtar Pacha au Ministre de la Guerre relate les faits douloureux suivants :—

"L'ennemi, en se retirant des Cantons de Chourakal et de Zarouchal, a tout détruit dans sa retraite, maisons, plantations, et habitations, et a laissé la population dans le plus affreux dénûment, sans subsistance et sans abri. Les troupes Russes ont emmené comme prisonniers à Alexandropol la femme et les enfants de Youssouf Bey, Caïmacam de Chourakal, son frère Mehmed Bey et ses enfants, enfin les filles de la maison du Caïmacam de Zarouchal. Ces prisonniers, après avoir subi tous les outrages, sont actuellement dirigés sur Tiflis."

Une dépêche de Choumla, adressé à mon Département, nous donne avis que Mr. Reade, Consul d'Angleterre à Roustchouk, et M. de Torcy, Attaché Militaire Français, ont visité vingt-et-un réfugiés blessés, soit dix femmes et onze enfants, dont dix à la mamelle, âgés de huit à dix mois. Enfin, des renseignements qui nous parviennent du théâtre de la guerre dans les provinces du Danube, il résulte que les Russes ont pour système général et uniforme de s'attacher à s'emparer des villages sans défense, et, après les avoir écrasés à coups de canon, à massacrer les habitants désarmés et à enlever les femmes pour les outrager lorsqu'elles ne sont pas elles-mêmes mises à mort. Les Russes menacent de faire subir le même sort aux villages Chrétiens qui ne se soumettraient pas, et dont les habitants refuseraient de se laisser enrôler.

No. 469.

Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 25.*)

Serajevo, July 24, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

I PROPOSE to send Vice-Consul Cooper with military expedition about to be made against Despotovich. The Commander of the troops in Bosnia consents.

No. 470.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 298.) *Constantinople, July 24, 1877, 3·15 P.M.*
(Telegraphic.)
SULTAN has sent following message to me through Tahir Bey, one of his Aide-de-camps:—

His Majesty entreats the Queen and Her Majesty's Government to use their influence with the Emperor of Russia to put an end to the shocking cruelties committed by his troops upon the inoffensive Mussulman population of the country which he has invaded. Men, women, and children are being outraged and murdered in the most horrible manner. His Majesty can scarcely believe that the Emperor wishes that this war should become one of extermination and of brigands, and trusts that representations will be made to him of the character which his troops are giving it.

By the Sultan's command Tahir Bey, who has just arrived from Schumla and the seat of war, gave me an account of revolting acts of atrocity committed by the Russians and Bulgarians, of which he has been an eye witness. This account is, I grieve to say, confirmed, in a great measure, by the reports received from our Consular Agents, newspaper correspondents, and other sources.

No. 471.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 300.) *Constantinople, July 25, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)
FOLLOWING just received from Vice-Consul at Adrianople, dated yesterday evening:—

"News comes that Russians are making rapid progress.

"They have destroyed railway line at Haskeui, between Philippopolis, also between Yeni-Zara and Seimen, and have crossed the Mariedsa.

"Train from Philippopolis (?) cut off.

"Haskui reported on fire.

"Suleiman despatching great forces to Tirnova junction."

No. 472.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

Bucharest, July 25, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)
IT is believed that the Roumanian army, at the request of the Emperor Alexander, is to occupy Nicopolis.

No. 473.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

Belgrade, July 25, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)
MARSHALL reports that Nicopolis has been relieved by the Turks on Monday and that Russians retired on Sistova.

No. 474.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 25.)

Galatz, July 25, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)
WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday only one division of the 7th Russian corps d'armée entered Roumania, and that has retired towards Odessa.

Estimated Russian force in the Dobrudja 40,000 at most. I have no news of 15th corps d'armée. Cavalry are passing by rail, probably 10th corps d'armée.

No. 475.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Freeman.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 25, 1877, 5 P.M.*
IN reply to your telegram of the 24th, I do not understand what advantage would be gained by the presence of Vice-Consul Cooper with the Turkish troops. It might give rise to misapprehension, and, unless you have some strong reason for it, had better not accompany them.

No. 476.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July 25, 1877, 5·15 P.M.*
WITH reference to your telegram No. 298, I have already brought to the notice of the Russian Ambassador the reports of cruelties inflicted on Mussulman population received from you and from Her Majesty's Consuls.

A Parliamentary paper containing these, as well as the communications on the subject received from Musurus Pasha, was presented yesterday.

No. 477.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 367.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 25, 1877.*
I HAVE received your telegram of the 24th instant, stating that the Sultan had sent a message to you through one of his aides-de-camp begging the Queen and Her Majesty's Government to use their influence with the Emperor of Russia to put a stop to the cruelties which his troops are reported to have been guilty of during their occupation of Turkish territory, and in reply I have to state to you that I have already called the attention of the Russian Ambassador to the reports which I have received from you and from Her Majesty's Consuls of cruelties inflicted on the inoffensive Mussulman population.

I should add, for your information, that a Parliamentary paper, containing the above reports, as well as the communications which I have received from Musurus Pasha on the subject, was presented to both Houses of Parliament yesterday.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 478.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 258.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 25, 1877.*
WITH reference to your telegram of the 23rd instant, in which you report that Count Andrassy has stated to your Excellency that I had informed Count Beust that Her Majesty's Government do not object to the temporary occupation of Constantinople by Russia, I have to request your Excellency, by telegraph, to inform Count Andrassy that I have never said anything of the sort, and that I begged you at once to contradict this statement, which I can only ascribe to some misunderstanding at Vienna.

Count Beust, whom I have since seen, positively denies having telegraphed to Count Andrassy in the sense of your above-mentioned telegram, and says that, on the contrary, he reported my opinion as altogether opposite to that ascribed to me by Count Andrassy in his remarks to your Excellency.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 479.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Freeman.

(No. 16.)
Foreign Office, July 25, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your telegram of the 24th instant, reporting that you propose to send Mr. Vice-Consul Cooper with the Turkish expedition about to start to attack the insurgents in the neighbourhood of Bosnia, and in reply I have to state to you that I do not see what advantage would be gained thereby.

The presence of the British Vice-Consul with the Turkish troops might give rise to misapprehension, and I am of opinion that he had better not accompany them, unless you have strong reasons for his doing so.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 480.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 26.)

(Telegraphic.)
St. Petersburgh, July 26, 1877.

IT is officially reported here that Russian troops, under General Schildner-Schuldner, sustained a severe reverse at Plevna on the 20th instant, being compelled to retreat, with loss of 1,000 men.

No. 481.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 26.)

(Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.)
Bucharest, July 26, 1877.

REFERRING to my telegram of yesterday, Nicopolis is occupied by Roumanian army, consequent on check suffered by Russian forces at Plevna.

No. 482.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 26.)

(No. 301.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, July 26, 1877.

CONSUL FREEMAN telegraphs to me that there is no reason to believe that any preparations are being made in Dalmatia for the occupation of Bosnia; but Turkish military authorities have been instructed to concert measures with Austrian military authorities in Croatia and Dalmatia for the suppression of insurrection, and that a Turkish Staff-Major is leaving for frontier with this object. Grand Vizier admits that this is true, but expresses strong doubts as to realization of the intentions of Austria.

Austrian Ambassador gives me the most positive and explicit assurances that Austria has no desire or intention of occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina under present circumstances. He maintains that accounts of military preparations in Dalmatia are either unfounded or greatly exaggerated.

No. 483.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 65. Political.)
Bosna-Serai, July 13, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the troops sent to quell the insurrection in the north-west of this province do not appear as yet to have had much success. Skirmishes with the insurgents are from time to time reported, but marauding

bands are nevertheless constantly making their appearance in different parts of the country, and driving off the herds and flocks, and committing other depredations.

Halil Bey, the Commander of the police force in Bosnia, was lately despatched with about 200 zaptiehs to the Sandjak of Bihaeh, to hunt down some of these bands, and the Governor-General seems to anticipate that he will do better service than the troops.

Profiting by the unsettled state of the country, a band of some thirty brigands, Mussulmans as well as Christians, now infests the Brood road between Derbend and Doboi, and a few days ago the Khan at Modran, about six miles from the former of those places, was attacked and pillaged, and afterwards burnt.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 484.

Lieutenant-Colonel Siborne to the Earl of Derby,—(Received July 27.)

(No. 23.)
Galatz, July 21, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegrams of the 11th, 14th, and 17th instant, and to that of your Lordship of the last-named date, I have the honour to transmit herewith the Memorandum which the Danube Commission has addressed to the respective Governments on the subject of the blocking of the Sulina Channel by the Russians by means of sunken vessels filled with stones, and of stones heaped on top of them.

It will be observed that the Commission has abstained from entering into the question of the breach of the neutrality guaranteed to its works by the Treaty of London of 1871, which this act undoubtedly entails, regarding that question as one falling more properly within the province of the several Governments interested, and that we have confined our observations to the general effects from engineering and financial points of view which are certain to result from the damming up of the Sulina branch.

It is probable that the Russians themselves in adopting this measure were not aware of the serious future results to the navigation which it involved, and only looked upon it as a temporary and certainly most efficacious means of excluding the Turks from the portion of the river already under their control.

We have not as yet received the reports of our engineers on the subject, but there can be no doubt that the formation of a dam a mile-and-a-half below the upper entrance of the Sublina arm of the Danube, and consequent stoppage of the current, are equivalent to the creation of shoals extending more or less throughout this branch, and most probably to the silting up of the Sulina mouth.

The effect of great floods in the Danube, such as that of this year, is to carry down from the Upper River an immensely increased volume of matter held in suspension, and to deposit this in the parts of the river nearer the sea when the current is less rapid.

It is just at this season of the year, when the flood begins to empty itself, so to speak, into the sea, and when the water is becoming confined within the banks, that an increased scour takes place, which, in a great measure, neutralizes the evil effects of the flood, although they can only be more completely removed by dredging and other works.

The erection of the dam entirely precludes this beneficial action of the river at the very time when, owing to the state of war, the Commission is prevented from carrying on its works.

The consequences to the navigation are not easy to predict, but will certainly be in increasing proportion to the duration of the obstacle.

Every day of its existence adds more and more to the subsequent difficulties to be encountered.

Not only will the financial results of this proceeding, which are, for present purposes, sufficiently indicated in the Memorandum, be of the most serious character if the removal of the obstacle is not immediately taken in hand, but the very existence for a considerable period of the commerce of these countries, which has been so highly developed, if not created, by the opening of the Lower Danube navigation, will be gravely menaced.

It is therefore of the last importance that this obstruction should be cleared away as soon as possible.

It has been reported to us that the Turks were taking measures to prevent the Russians from reaching Sulina. In fact, each belligerent is endeavouring to prevent the approach of the other through the Sulina branch.

The question, therefore, suggests itself whether it would not be practicable to effect the neutralization of this portion of the river—say from the third mile, or upper limit of the port of Sulina to the St. George's Chatal during the war, and to replace it at once, in the general interests of Europe, in the hands of the Danube Commission, and thus enable the latter either to arrest, or at least greatly to mitigate, the evils which at present threaten the future navigation and commerce of the Lower Danube.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. C. SIBORNE, *Lieutenant-Colonel, R.E.*,
British Commissioner on Danube.

Inclosure in No. 484.

Memorandum addressed by the Danube European Commission to the Signatory Powers of the Public Act of November 2, 1865.

LA Commission Européenne du Danube, étant chargée par l'Acte Public de 1865 d'administrer au profit de la navigation les ouvrages et établissements créés en exécution de l'Article XVI du Traité de Paris du 30 Mars, 1856, de veiller à leur maintien et conservation, et de leur donner tout le développement que les besoins de la navigation pourront réclamer, se croit obligée d'attirer l'attention des Puissances Signataires de l'Acte Public précité sur les suites désastreuses qu'exercera l'encombrement du bras de Soulina par des bateaux et pierres immergés d'après l'ordre des autorités militaires Russes.

Si cette mesure ne devait avoir d'autre résultat que de rendre momentanément impossible la navigation dans le bras de Soulina, la Commission pourrait la considérer comme une conséquence nécessaire de la guerre; mais malheureusement le barrage exécuté aura pour effet inévitable la formation de bas-fonds dans toute la longueur du bras de Soulina et l'ensablement de son embouchure, et fera disparaître, en proportion croissante avec le temps pendant lequel il subsistera, les résultats que les efforts incessants de la Commission ont mis vingt ans à obtenir.

Par l'effet de ce barrage même, s'il n'est pas bientôt enlevé, les conditions de navigabilité du bras en question se trouveront donc changées à tel point que même après la cessation de la guerre actuelle le *statu quo* ne pourra être rétabli qu'avec une perte immense de capital et de temps.

Dès lors la mesure précitée ne semblerait plus pouvoir être considérée comme un incident de fait temporaire rendu inévitable par l'état de guerre, ou comme une entrave momentanée, mais plutôt comme un obstacle apporté en général à la future navigation dans ce bras du Danube, et qui menacerait d'exercer ses conséquences fort au delà de l'époque à laquelle la présente situation exceptionnelle aura cessé d'exister.

Non-seulement la plus grande partie du capital qu'ont coûté les travaux exécutés jusqu'à ce jour dans le fleuve et le port de Soulina, et auxquels toutes les nations ont contribué par leurs marines, aura été dépensée en pure perte, mais la Commission se trouve menacée du manque presque total de ses revenus provenant des taxes de navigation, au moment même où elle devrait faire face à des dépenses exceptionnelles afin de rétablir l'état de choses antérieur à la guerre.

La Commission ne peut non plus perdre de vue, qu'elle a encore envers la Sublime Porte une dette d'environ 4,000,000 fr., et envers la maison Bischoffsheim et Goldschmidt une autre dette s'élevant à plus de 2,000,000 fr. garantie par de Grandes Puissances, dont les termes de remboursement sont fixés par des Conventions.

Convaincue de l'attention sérieuse avec laquelle les considérations développées ci-dessus seront accueillies, la Commission émet par conséquent le vœu qu'une entente entre les Gouvernements intéressés permette dans le plus bref délai possible l'enlèvement des obstacles immergés.

Elle croit toutefois de son devoir de déclarer dès à présent: qu'elle décline la responsabilité des suites que le barrage ci-dessus signalé aura au point de vue technique et financier, et qu'elle se réserve dans toute sa plénitude le droit de réclamer

tous dommages intérêts pour le préjudice que la mesure en question lui aura fait éprouver.

(Signé) La Commission Européenne du Danube.

Galatz, le 21 Juillet, 1877.

No. 485.

Lieutenant-Colonel Siborne to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 24. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Galatz, July 21*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the reason why the Executive Committee of the Danube Commission, consisting of the Austro-Hungarian and Italian Commissioners and myself, has not hitherto addressed a Memorandum in the name of the Commission, as it is empowered to do, to the several Governments respecting the blocking of the Sulina branch, is that we have waited for, but as yet have received no replies from our absent colleagues to our communications on the subject.

We did not expect to receive such from the Russian or Turkish Delegates, owing to the circumstances of the war.

The German Commissioner has privately intimated that he awaited instructions from Berlin, whilst we have had no information as yet from M. Herbette.

As it is important that no time should be lost, we have decided on no longer delaying the issuing of the Memorandum.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. C. SIBORNE, *Lieutenant-Colonel, R.E.*,
British Commissioner on Danube.

No. 486.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret and Confidential.) *Bjela, Bulgaria, July 20*, 1877.

I AM authorized by the Emperor to state that, notwithstanding recent successes, and though of course His Majesty cannot suspend military operations, he is of the same opinions, and ready to treat for peace if the Sultan will make suitable propositions.

I cannot too strongly express my conviction that an attack on Constantinople can only be avoided by immediate overtures on the part of the Porte.

No. 487.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bjela, July 25*, 1877.

GREAT indignation here at the news that English and foreign correspondents with the Turks have testified to Russian cruelties in Bulgaria. It is argued here that Russian cavalry having only advanced as far as Piranen, even if such cruelties had been committed, which is emphatically denied, the Turks could have known nothing of them; and, furthermore, that it would be impossible to perpetrate atrocities on Turks, as they are compelled to abandon their villages before the Russian approach.

Since my last telegram to your Lordship, I have seen two English correspondents who have been at the front, and one of whom has been present at several reconnaissances, and they both speak in the highest terms of the kind nature of the Russian soldiers. Grand Duke Wladimir reports that while making a reconnaissance he saw many cases of Turkish atrocities on Bulgarians; among them a murdered woman. It would be well if this telegram were published.

No. 488.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bjela, July 26, 1877.*
(Confidential.)

YESTERDAY Emperor thanked me for sending telegram to your Lordship respecting alleged Russian atrocities, but feared it would not be either believed or published by Her Majesty's Government, the feeling in England being at present so strong against Russia. His Majesty deprecated this feeling, and again assured me that he did not dream of interfering with English interests.

No. 489.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, July 27, 1877.*
(Confidential.)

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs tells me that Roumanian troops have not yet crossed to Nicopolis.

He apprehends that some question of military etiquette has arisen which has deterred Prince Charles from giving the definite order.

No. 490.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 302.) *Constantinople, July 26, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)

PORTE has forbidden transmission from any part of the Empire of telegrams concerning military or naval operations and movements.

No. 491.

The Earl of Derby to Colonel Wellesley.

Foreign Office, July 27, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

YOUR telegram of the 25th was received this morning, and will be laid before Parliament to-day.

No. 492.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

Vienna, July 27, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Turkish Ambassador, although without information from the Porte, believes that Midhat Pasha is on his way to Constantinople, and telegrams have arrived here for him.

No. 493.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 304.) *Constantinople, July 27, 1877, 10·30 A.M.*
(Telegraphic.)

THE Russians are making serious progress on this side of the Balkans, and may be soon at Adrianople, from whence a few short marches would take them to the Gallipoli Peninsula.

I venture once more to urge upon Her Majesty's Government to take into their most earnest consideration the occupation of this most important position, not as a threat to Russia, or as a step towards war, but in the interests of peace and humanity,

and as a guarantee for the interests of England. If we told Russia clearly and decidedly that we will not consent to her taking possession of Constantinople, she might, through our mediation, and that of the other Powers, make peace at Adrianople. If Russia be once in the possession of the Dardanelles, all action on our part would be paralysed. She could dictate such terms of peace as she might think fit. Should the Russians advance upon Constantinople the Sultan will go to Brussa, where I understand preparations are already being secretly made for his reception. His departure and that of the Government would leave the capital at the mercy of a mob and of a defeated and demoralized army. It might be set on fire, and the Christians and Europeans massacred. The presence of many thousands of refugees from all sides, in the utmost misery, with stories of Russian atrocities, which may be true or false, is causing already great excitement among the Mussulman population. The warning as to this imminent danger comes to me from so many high and trustworthy sources that I cannot altogether neglect it. In the event of it proving true, our fleet could do nothing to prevent a massacre, for it would be the height of rashness to bring it to Constantinople if the Dardanelles were in the possession of Russia.

German Ambassador suggests that we might land part of the crews of the small foreign gunboats stationed here, but this measure would be of little avail, except perhaps for the protection of the houses and property belonging to Legations. As regards a guarantee for our own interests, if Her Majesty's Government have decided upon allowing Russia to occupy Constantinople the possession of the Dardanelles would always prevent her from remaining there.

This matter is of such a vital and urgent importance that I trust that your Excellency will forgive me for again bringing it before you.

No. 494.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 305. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 27, 1877, 1 P.M.*

AUSTRIAN Ambassador got a Greek gentleman who has access to the Sultan to convey to His Majesty his advice that His Majesty should leave Constantinople at once and go to Brussa. His Majesty was excessively angry at the suggestion, and declared that, rather than leave the capital, he would shed the last drop of his blood on its ruins. Austrian Ambassador seems so convinced that some great disaster is to take place, that he is making, I am told, preparations for removal of the archives of his Embassy. His advice to the Sultan was, it appears to me, very unwise.

Nothing could be more likely to lead to a great calamity then departure of the Sultan at this moment from Constantinople.

No. 495.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 262. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 27, 1877.*

THE Italian Ambassador spoke to me this afternoon of the reports which were being widely spread by the continental press as to the intentions of the Italian Government. His Excellency said that these reports originated at Vienna, and were without foundation. They were probably intended to cover designs on the part of Austria which were not friendly to Italian interests. The Italian Government, General Menabrea said, hope that the English Government and people will not be induced to credit these rumours. He was instructed to deny absolutely the stories that had appeared of an alliance between Russia and Italy, or of an intended occupation of territory by Italian forces.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 496.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 87. Political.) *Orialuka, July 13, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that I have been received with great courtesy by the Prince of Montenegro.

I have had the honour of holding several conversations with the Prince, and which, I explained to His Highness, were not to be considered official. At these interviews the Prince stated to me that he was bound in honour to keep up hostilities against the Turks, with a view to forcing as many of their troops as possible to remain in North Albania.

He had nevertheless been counselled by his powerful ally quite recently to procure rest for his people by coming to terms with Turkey. I therefore prayed the Prince not to resume active operations without further hesitation; and though His Highness gave me no promise, I trust it is not quite impossible that he may follow the asserted counsels of Russia.

I have not been able to telegraph the foregoing to Mr. Layard.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 497.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 86. Political.) *Cettigné, July 15, 1877.*

My Lord,

AS soon as I had the honour to receive your Lordship's permission to visit Montenegro, in accordance with the suggestion made by me, I telegraphed to M. Duby, Prince Nicholas' secretary, asking whether I might enter the Principality viâ the Lake of Scutari and Rieka. A prompt answer informed me that the proposed route was not available, but that His Highness the Prince, who was still at Orialuka, invited me to visit him there if I could pass the Turkish lines at Spuz under cover of a flag of truce.

Suleiman Pasha at once promised to facilitate my movements, and on Wednesday last I left Scutari, and next day reached Orialuka without any difficulty or danger, both the Turkish and Montenegrin authorities having taken every necessary precaution to secure the safety of my passage across their respective outposts.

Just before leaving Scutari Suleiman Pasha placed in my hands the letter and inclosure of which the accompanying are copies and translations; and your Lordship is the first person I have informed of my possession of these documents. From my following report your Lordship will gather why I have found it expedient to keep the fact of their existence secret.

Prince Nicholas received me at Orialuka with the greatest courtesy and made me his guest. His Highness listened to my explanations that my visit was of a private nature, but quickly afforded me an opportunity of avowing that it had been hastened by a hope that I might be able to place before His Highness my personal conclusions of the feelings that now existed on the part of the Turkish authorities in Albania towards Montenegro, and which might not be known to His Highness.

I only proceeded to enlarge on this topic when His Highness had repeated to me more than once that he clearly understood that I was speaking to him in no official character, and that I fully expected, and even hoped, His Highness would communicate my conversation to those around him.

I then said that, from my intercourse with the Commanders-in-chief and other Turkish authorities in Albania, and which, from the mere fact of my being an Englishman, is perhaps more frequent than that of other foreigners, I had thought I had observed a new-born desire on the part of the Turks to pursue with less rancour, or even abandon altogether, the attack against Montenegro. This had been brought about, I believe, by the progress which had recently been made by the Russians on the Danube, and I understood that a very considerable portion of the Turkish forces that had been ranged against the Principality were already about to embark and leave Albania altogether. I had reason to think, also, that a further advance of the

Russians would necessitate an even greater withdrawal of troops. Under these circumstances, unless Montenegro could hope to pursue with success offensive operations, the war would degenerate into border encounters between the two peasantries and in the occasional shooting of a negligent sentry. His Highness' sentiments of humanity were too well known to make it possible that he should advocate hostilities with the sole object of destroying a few lives, and it appeared to me not quite impossible that some kind of an arrangement might be come to for the establishment of a truce which would have the effect of stopping the further effusion of blood, of permitting the resumption of agricultural pursuits and frontier market intercourse, and still leave political matters for settlement when the war between Russia and Turkey is about to receive a solution.

Prince Nicholas admitted that the realization of the hopes of Montenegro was entirely dependent on the results of the war now raging on the Danube, and that the sacrifices he had made in men and every resource of the Principality called loudly for a term of repose, but his princely sense of honour made it absolutely necessary that hostilities should continue on his borders as long as Russia remained at war with Turkey. His Highness, however, wished me to understand that he was absolutely at liberty to enter into separate negotiations with Turkey, and if, for instance, he could inform his people that he had secured for them, besides all the territory that had been held during the past armistice, Niehsich, Spuz, and Podgoritza, and the Lake Islands, peace could be concluded with their hearty approbation.

The Prince admitted that he merely drew this picture to make me understand how impossible it was at present to dream even of a cessation of hostilities, and as such was the case, His Highness requested that even "academical" discussions of an arrangement with Turkey should not be renewed between us.

In the same evening, however, I received an invitation to join the Prince at tea, and, as soon as we were left alone, I was surprised to find him renew the forbidden topic. His Highness, at great length, explained to me his personal aversion of all the horrors of war, and the great sacrifices he had made to keep faithfully his engagements with his allies, even when conduct similar to that of Servia would have better served the interests of his country.

In the face of this encouragement I once more enumerated all the disadvantages of a continuance of hostilities. I pointed out that all the Turkish forts and garrison towns on the Herzegovina frontier were now fully provisioned for a year; that nothing the Montenegrins could do would prevent the Turks from withdrawing nearly the whole of their regular forces for transmission to the Danube and Asia Minor, and that, notwithstanding, the Turks would still be quite strong enough to hold every blockhouse around the Principality. As for the sense of honour that was forcing His Highness to continue necessarily resultless hostilities, I considered it could only be animated by direct action on the side of His Highness' ally Russia, and I almost felt confident that this action, on being tested, would be found absent.

Upon this the Prince asked me if I authorized him to make use of my statements, and I immediately replied that, although I had said over and over again that I spoke in my private capacity, I had from the first endeavoured to clearly explain that not a word I would say would be ventured upon with the hope that it should not reach M. Yonine, the Russian Political Agent. I communicated my personal appreciations of the present feelings of the Turkish authorities in North Albania in no intriguing spirit, and urged His Highness to prevent the possibility of my being wrongly judged by letting M. Yonine know all I had said.

The Prince here assured me that he did not think I need fear being misunderstood, as Russia had quite recently counselled him to seek an arrangement with his enemy, and he repented that nothing stood in the way of attempting to stop hostilities but his own clear appreciation of what was due from him towards his ally.

I informed His Highness, that, if he had no objection, I would telegraph the nature of our conversations to your Lordship, and he expressed his satisfaction that I should do so. Next morning I forwarded to your Lordship my telegram dated Orialuka, July 13.

Nevertheless, as I was afraid that my visit to the Prince might still be misunderstood by those who are inclined to see deep and crooked designs in everything English, I thought it better not to return to Scutari by Spuz, but to adopt the Cettigné and Cattaro route, so as to see the Agents and other influential people in the Montenegrin capital.

On my way here, I met Colonel Thömmel, the Austrian Political Agent, going to Orialuka; and, during a wayside conversation of upwards of an hour, I ascertained from

him that immediately after the passage of Suleyman Pasha from Nichsich to Spuz, the Prince and his Court were completely disheartened and quite disposed to conclude peace with Turkey, and that great irritation was felt against Russia for having drawn Montenegro on to its apparent destruction without affording it any effective assistance. That this position of affairs was only changed by the passage of the Russians across the Danube, to the extent of observing a passive resistance; but that, suddenly, when the foreign newspapers, and especially those of Servia and other Slav countries, with their appreciation of Suleyman Pasha's operations, commenced to arrive, the warlike resolutions of the Prince burst out anew.

Colonel Thömmel said the Prince's personal vanity had been greatly hurt through the malicious insinuations of the Servian newspapers that he had shown a want of personal courage, and had thus discouraged his people into permitting the passage of the Turks across his territory, and that M. Yonine has availed himself of this feeling to renew his advice that Montenegro should re-occupy the positions held when the second campaign commenced, advice which, it had been clearly seen, had weakened the Montenegrin defence by spreading it over a great extent of country, but which now could be safely followed, as the Turks had assumed the defensive.

Colonel Thömmel observed to me that, if the Turks were really disposed to treat with Montenegro, they surely did not imagine the first advances should come from the side of the Prince. I replied that, of course, this was not more possible than that the Turks should make the first steps; but that, if a time arrived when both sides were anxious for a truce, I doubted not that there were friendly Powers, and even neighbours, who could bring it about without a sacrifice of self-esteem on either side.

Colonel Thömmel also said that it was his conviction that Montenegro was incapable of attempting any serious operations on the Turkish frontiers, and that only occasional shots would be fired to maintain a right to speak as one of the combatants when peace is to be made.

I remarked that this would prove a valueless advantage if Montenegro should be disposed to ask for more than Russia might think necessary to obtain for its protégé. Montenegro could not imagine that its threat to continue the war would influence negotiations when Russia had determined on peace.

On my arrival here, I found that I could not see M. Yonine, as he was seriously indisposed, but M. Speyer, his Secretary, whith whom I am on intimate terms, told me that the Prince had informed M. Yonine of all that had passed between us; and, he said, he had to admit to me that my having ventured to talk to the Prince about the possibility of a truce, had struck his chief and him as a want of appreciation on my part of the respect that was due to His Highness; and, no doubt, the Prince had been hurt at my conduct.

I did not disguise my surprise at the view of the matter represented by M. Speyer, for the Prince had left me under an entirely different impression. When I took leave of His Highness, he expressed his hope that our meeting was but the commencement of a long acquaintance, and he invited me, when peace is made, to make a tour in his Principality with him. I was, therefore, glad to find out later that M. Speyer had been merely detailing the views of his chief, and not of the Prince, of which, he said, he was unaware.

When I saw M. Duby, I told him all that had passed between the Prince and me, and also what M. Speyer said M. Yonine thought, and M. Duby begged me to retain my original impressions of the Prince's sentiments, and to disregard the attempt of the Russians to create a misunderstanding. He agreed that the time had probably passed—now that the Turks were leaving the frontiers of Montenegro—for any arrangement, but he warned me that the Prince was fully aware, although he hardly dared to admit it, that both the Russians and Austrians are working here not for his, but for their own, interests, and that His Highness is most disposed to listen to advice from Englishmen, which, whether official or not, he feels to be disinterested.

I must here add that M. Speyer also said that the Prince of Montenegro, whenever he might be disposed to come to terms with Turkey, had a ready-made friend in his neighbour Austria, and that English intervention was in any case misplaced. I replied that no intervention had been attempted, and that Austria certainly would not be crossed by England if she embarked in this country on the mission of a peace-maker.

The same assurances as those of M. Duby were given to me at Orahuka by Dr. Feurier, the medical man lent to the Prince by the French Government, and who added that he felt sure my advocacy for the cessation of hostilities, even if not acted on immediately, would bear fruit hereafter.

I trust your Lordship will not disapprove my having made no use whatever of

Suleyman Pasha's proposals. I felt they were merely handed to me to disguise the fact that Turkey was making the first advances to Montenegro, for he had let me understand that any arrangement having as base the suspension of hostilities, and leaving open all other matters until the results of the war now existing between Russia and Turkey were secured, would be accepted by the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 497.

Suleyman Pasha to Consul Kirby Green.

M. le Consul, *Scutari, le 11 Juillet*, 1877.

REVETU des pouvoirs nécessaires de la part de mon Gouvernement j'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre ci-joint les conditions définitives suivant lesquelles la Sublime Porte serait disposée à cesser les hostilités envers la Principauté de Monténégro.

Je saisis, &c.

Le Commandant-en-chef de l'Armée Impériale de la Bosnie et l'Herzégovine,

(Signé) SULEYMAN.

(Translation.)

Sir, *Scutari, July* 11, 1877.

HOLDING the necessary powers from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the definitive conditions according to which the Porte would be disposed to cease hostilities against the Principality of Montenegro.

I seize, &c.

The Commander-in-chief of the Imperial Army of Bosnia and the Herzegovina,

(Signed) SULEYMAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 497.

Conditions.

LE Gouvernement Impérial maintient le *statu quo ante* vis-à-vis du Monténégro, tant au sujet de sa ligne frontière, qu'à celui de sa situation politique.

Les insurgés appartenant aux provinces de Scutari, Bosnie, et Herzégovine, hommes ou femmes, et qui exprimeraient le désir de rentrer dans leurs pays, seraient admis à le faire sans aucune condition spéciale. Le Gouvernement Impérial promet de les faire rentrer en possession de leurs anciennes propriétés et de leurs droits. Les Monténégrins ne doivent exercer aucune menace morale ou matérielle sur les insurgés qui par le repentir veulent rentrer dans cette voie.

La Principauté de Monténégro acceptant officiellement les deux conditions susmentionnées les hostilités cesseraient pour faire place à la paix et à la tranquilité.

(Signé) SULEYMAN.

(Translation.)

THE Imperial Government maintains the *statu quo ante* towards Montenegro, both with regard to its line of frontier and as to its political situation.

The insurgents belonging to the provinces of Scutari, Bosnia, and the Herzegovina, men and women, and who may express the desire to return to their countries, should be allowed to do it without any special condition. The Imperial Government promises to enable them to re-enter in possession of their former properties and of their rights. The Montenegrins must employ no threat, either moral or material, against the insurgents who, repenting, wish to adopt this course.

The Principality, on officially accepting these two above-mentioned conditions, hostilities will cease and be replaced by peace and tranquillity.

(Signed) SULEYMAN.

No. 498.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 89. Political.)

Cettigné, July 16, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that when I was leaving the Montenegrin head-quarters at Orialuka, Prince Nicholas desired me to ask, when at Cettigné, to see the Princess, in order that I might give her Highness a verbal report as to his satisfactory appearance after the fatigues and anxieties of the recent military operations.

When I reached Cettigné I found that the Princess was seriously indisposed, and I was afraid that I should be obliged to leave without accomplishing Prince Nicholas' wish, when next day her Highness sent to inform me that she had expressly made an effort to leave her sick room, in order to accord me an audience, and that I should be received in the afternoon.

The courtesy of her Highness' reception of me was as flattering as that of the Prince, and I have understood that it has arisen in no little way from the desire of their Highnesses to show their appreciation of the recent residence at their capital of Mr. Monson, whose praises I have heard from every Montenegrin with whom I have spoken.

Her Highness also said in a little speech, which was not the less gracious because it had been evidently studied, that both Prince Nicholas and her Highness felt great satisfaction at seeing English Consuls occasionally at Cettigné, as they saw that they were now no longer ignored and unknown by the English Government and people. Her Highness expressed a hope that I should return very shortly to Montenegro, as the English were always the advocates of peace.

I have ventured to report the foregoing to your Lordship as a proof that M. Duby is right in saying that my visit has not been displeasing to the Montenegrins, whatever it may be to M. Yonine, the Russian Agent.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 499.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 49. Political.)

Salonica, July 18, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith inclosed (Inclosure No. 1), for your Lordship's information, a copy of my despatch of yesterday's date to Her Majesty's Ambassador, containing also an inclosure, No. 1, being the second report from the dragoman of this Consulate, on the state of this province, with some observations of my own, and the departure of more troops for the war.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 499.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Salonica, July 17, 1877.

Sir,

AS a sequel to my report of the 7th July, I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith inclosed (Inclosure No. 1) a copy of Mr. Jean Bizzo's, first dragoman of this Consulate, report of the 14th July, by which your Excellency will see that there is very little hope of any amelioration in the present disorganized state of this province; because the Governor-General is either unwilling, or perhaps unable, to control the "Beys," who have been so long in power under infinite ramifications, and dispossess them of their "vested interests" in lawlessness, which they consider and claim as a right, from having been so long enjoyed by them. Nothing but very stringent measures, indeed, will have any effect; but I doubt very much if such can at the present moment be put into execution. Still, it may be useful and right that your Excellency be informed of the real state how matters stand.

Two hundred and forty-eight mounted men, properly dressed and armed, have left to-day to join the army on the Danube; in passing through Serres and Drama these will be joined by others who are there ready to go also. Eighty have remained here, awaiting the arrival of the rest of the contingent, who are volunteers furnished by the towns, and who will probably be completed to the number of 2,000. They are equipped the same as the regular cavalry and mounted police, "Souvarees,"

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have heard that our Vali, Nousret Pasha, having misgivings about Yahia Bey's connection with the brigands, has decided on sending him to the front with a corps of suspected characters, of whom he will take the command, and thus get rid of him and them out of this vilayet.

E. B. B. B.

Inclosure 2 in No. 499.

M. Bizzo to Acting Consul Barker.

M. le Consul,

Salonique, le 14 Juillet, 1877.

FAISANT suite à mon rapport en date du 5 de ce mois, j'ai l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance ce qui suit: le Gouverneur-Général Nousret Pacha a chargé Yaya Bey de poursuivre les brigands avec une force armée de 200 soldats (Mustahfiz), dans les communes de Veria et Catterina. Les dits soldats à peine sortis de Salonique ont commis plusieurs exactions dans les villages Calusa, Pozirites, et Metch. Les habitants Chrétiens des dits villages ont été soumis à toutes sortes de taxes. Plainte a été portée à l'autorité de Veria, mais sans aucun résultat. Il est certain que Yaya Bey ne fera rien contre le brigandage parceque il est connu parmi la population Musulmane et Chrétienne comme chef des maraudeurs, car il a à son service et dans ses fermes des brigands et de receleurs de la pire espèce. Sa conduite a été plusieurs fois dénoncée aux autorités, mais jamais aucune mesure répressive n'a été prise contre lui. Le mois passé encore les hommes de Yaya Bey ont fait mettre en pièces le Vallaque Pentefunta, et malgré que le Caimacam de Veria a rapporté ce crime au Pacha, rien n'a été fait. Le Gouverneur-Général connait nominalement tous ces Chefs du brigandage, lesquels sont nourris et logés avec leurs bandes dans les fermes de Khasif Pacha et Yaya Bey et d'autres Beys Musulmans. Les protecteurs connus des brigands sont Zeir Bey et Yaya Bey. Zeir Bey est l'administrateur des trente-trois fermes appartenantes à Khasif Pacha dans les communes de Veria et Vodina.

Le Gouverneur-Général avait fait arrêter tout dernièrement dans la maison de Zeir Bey le fameux chef des brigands Albanais, Schereef. Cet individu avait formé une bande de brigands dans la ville de Salonique et il jouit de la protection de Zeir Bey et de Ismail Bey, Secrétaire du Conseil Provincial de Salonique.

L'arrestation de cet individu a satisfait l'opinion publique et a contribué à calmer le public, mais malheureusement (et on ignore les motifs), après six jours d'arrestation, le Pacha a ordonné qu'il soit mis en liberté. C'est Nousret Pacha lui-même qui, la dernière fois qu'il était Gouverneur de Salonique (il y a cinq ans), avait fait arrêter le même Schereef, qui occupait alors le poste de gardien des prisons, parcequ'il avait procuré des armes et des munitions et des limes aux galériens pour leur faciliter l'évasion et piller et dévaster la ville de Salonique. Mais peu après, Nousret Pacha a été changé et Schereef, au lieu d'être sévèrement puni, a été mis en liberté. Depuis que Schereef est de nouveau en liberté les habitants de Salonique sont assez inquiets, car d'un moment à l'autre quelque malheur peut arriver à la population.

Un enfant de 9 ans, Chrétien, a été brûlé vif à Veria par les brigands Albanais, à cause que son père avait dénoncé aux militaires leur retraite habituelle. Soixante Chrétiens de Catterina furent tout dernièrement dévalisés et maltraités par les Circassiens de la dite localité. Un Vallaque a aussi été tué par les Circassiens pour avoir refusé de délivrer son cheval. Bref, chaque jour le brigandage augmente sans que les autorités de Salonique, Veria, et Catterina se décident de prendre des mesures pour la prompte répression de tous ces crimes.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) JEAN BIZZO.

No. 500.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 805.)
Therapia, July 19, 1877.

My Lord,

SAFVET PASHA having resigned his post of Minister for Foreign Affairs, Arifi Pasha, Vice-President of the Senate, was yesterday named his successor. Arifi Pasha has already held the same office, and, I am informed, gave so little satisfaction to the diplomatic body in consequence of his way of dealing with affairs that representations were made against him and he was dismissed. Although Safvet Pasha had, in consequence of his mild and yielding disposition, but little influence in the Ministry, and it was very difficult, therefore, to transact business satisfactorily with him, his courtesy, his readiness to listen to representations, and his desire to do what was just and proper, rendered him very popular with all my colleagues.

Redif Pasha, the Minister of War, and Abdul Kerim Pasha, the Commander-in-chief of the army on the Danube, have been dismissed. The Sultan has been for some time extremely dissatisfied with the manner in which both these high officers of State have discharged their duties. It is to be regretted that they were not deprived of their places long ago, and before it was too late to remedy the misfortunes which they have brought upon their country.

The command of the army in Bulgaria will, I am informed, be given to Osman Pasha, hitherto General of the Division at Widdin.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 501.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 806.)
Therapia, July 19, 1877.

My Lord,

ON the 9th instant M. Condouriottis, the Greek Minister at the Porte, called to inform me that he had received instructions from M. Tricoupi to demand immediate satisfaction for the arbitrary and illegal treatment of an Hellenic subject, M. Philon, in Crete.

The way in which this gentleman was arrested by Sami Pasha, and was forcibly removed from the island, is described in Mr Sandwith's despatch to me of the 2nd instant. M. Condouriottis stated to me that he had been instructed by his Government to demand that M. Philon should be allowed to return to Crete, if only for a few days, and that Sami Pasha should be ordered to call upon the Greek Consul, and to offer an apology for the manner in which he had behaved towards an Hellenic subject. M. Condouriottis requested me to do what I could to induce Safvet Pasha to give the satisfaction required by the Hellenic Government. It appeared to me that the conduct of Sami Pasha in removing M. Philon by force without first communicating with the Greek Consul, and taking the steps required in such cases, was illegal. I directed Mr. Sandison so to inform Safvet Pasha, and to suggest, at the same time, that I considered it very desirable that some satisfaction should be given to the Hellenic Government, and that the demands of M. Tricoupi appeared to me, on the whole, not unreasonable. His Excellency told Mr. Sandison that he was not unwilling to consider them, but that it was necessary for him to submit them to the Council of Ministers. On the following day his Excellency informed me that the Council had declined to accede to M. Tricoupi's demands, and had proposed instead that the highest authority in the island after the Governor should call upon the Greek Consul to offer excuses for the treatment of M. Philon. That gentleman could not be allowed to return to Crete, as to permit him to do so on the demand of the Hellenic Government would be taken by the Cretans as a sign of weakness on the part of the Turkish Government, and might give rise to demonstrations, which would be very dangerous in the present critical state of the island.

M. Condouriottis, to whom the decision of the Council was communicated, referred it to M. Tricoupi, who refused to accept the proposed arrangement, threatening, at the same time, to have recourse to reprisals by arresting and expelling from Greece some Turkish subject. I saw Safvet Pasha myself after learning from the Hellenic Minister the resolution of his Government, and endeavoured to prevail upon his Excellency to avoid giving cause of quarrel to the Hellenes, and to get the Council

to reconsider its decision. His Excellency promised to do so; but he added that he doubted whether it would agree to the return of M. Philon, who, it could be proved, was an agent of a revolutionary committee in Greece, and had been sent to Crete to stir up a rebellion. However, his Excellency admitted that the way in which Sami Pasha had treated him was irregular, and he told me, confidentially, that after excuses had been offered by the second in authority in the island to the Greek Consul, Sami Pasha himself would call upon him. Safvet Pasha subsequently saw M. Condouriottis, to whom he made the same statement, which the Hellenic Minister did not consider satisfactory, insisting that the demands of his Government should be complied with. M. Condouriottis further stated to his Excellency that he had learnt that Sami Pasha, on being asked by some of the Consuls in Crete, whether the Capitulations were still in force with regard to foreigners in the island, replied that they were, except as to Hellenic subjects. The Hellenic Minister wished to know upon what authority Sami Pasha had made this statement. Safvet Pasha replied that he could not believe that it had been made, but that if it had, it was entirely unauthorized.

Yesterday Safvet Pasha left the Ministry, but before doing so he was able to inform M. Condouriottis that the demands of the Hellenic Government had been complied with, and that M. Philon would be allowed to return for a short time to Crete. This affair is thus satisfactorily settled.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 502.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 807.)
Therapia, July 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a report from Sir Arnold Kemball upon the strength of the opposing forces in Armenia and the prospects of the campaign.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 502.

Major-General Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.

Sir,
Head-Quarters' Camp, Kirk Punar, July 6, 1877.

I HAVE little to add to my report from Sari Kamysh, dated Wednesday, 4th instant, beyond the contents of the subjoined cypher telegram, which I have to-day transmitted to your Excellency in Turkish numerals:—

"The Turkish telegraph has now been extended from Zewin to Millidoz, to which point messages are forwarded by estafette and by orders from Constantinople; Mukhtar Pasha has sanctioned my making use of it henceforward.

"My information relating to the movements of the Russian army and its strength is derived from Mukhtar Pasha. His Excellency is convinced that the whole force in his front does not exceed 40 battalions of infantry, 3 regiments of dragoons, and 15 regiments of Cossacks, all much reduced from the original complements of 800 and 400 men respectively with which they took the field. Their strength in artillery is not ascertained, but may be taken at not less than 10 field batteries of 8 pieces each, besides galloper guns attached to the cavalry. The Russians, since the failure of their attack on Zewin, are reported to have suspended the siege of Kars and to have withdrawn their heavy guns to Kuruk Dereh, where they have fortified a position of great strength. To this position one portion of the force retiring from Zewin has proceeded with its heavy baggage and wounded. The remainder has joined the Russian camp before Kars.

"The 5 battalions which arrived here this morning are the remnant of those which recently garrisoned Ardahan; they were accompanied by the expected half-battery (3 guns) from Kuipri-Kui and by 150 Circassian horsemen. Muchir Mustafa Pasha, who came with three reinforcements, is, I understand, to take command at Kars. Liva Mustafa Jawid Pasha, with 3 battalions, is expected at Sari Kamysh, viâ Gulentah, to-morrow, when the aggregate Turkish force under the command of Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha will be:—

"In the field—33 battalions of infantry, 3 field batteries, and 6 mountain-guns; 4,000 cavalry, including about 1,200 Nizam and zaptiehs.

"In garrison at Kars—29 battalions (and 3 local militia battalions), 5 field batteries,* 1,000 cavalry, including 1 regiment of Nizam (350).

"Total—62 battalions, Nizam and Redif, 8 field batteries,† 5,000 cavalry.

"The Turkish right wing, which is now operating between Ooch Kilisseh and Bayazid, including the force under Faik Pasha, consists of:—

"26 battalions of infantry.

"3 field batteries; 16 mountain-guns.

"1,200 cavalry, including about 500 Nizam and zaptiehs; and a large contingent of Turkish irregular levies, both horse and foot.

"Ten batteries of the 1st, or Imperial corps d'armée (Kars) are said to have arrived at Trebizonde on their way to Erzeroum, but as desired by me, I presume that Mr. Zohrab has kept your Excellency informed of the reinforcements, including heavy guns arriving in that town during my absence and of the military movements falling under his observation."

Too much credit cannot be given to the Turkish Government for the activity and success of its efforts to make up for the previous neglect of its interests in Armenia. Compared with its strength and condition at the outset of the war, the Turkish army on this frontier has been placed in a fair way while acting on the defensive to repel Russian invasion, and reviewing results so unexpected, it is not indeed surprising that Russia should have miscalculated the military resources of her adversary; nevertheless, unless she should be reduced from whatever cause to sacrifice her rank as a first-rate military power, and should have deceived the world by undertaking an enterprise of such magnitude with inadequate means and without reserves, I must hold to the opinions I have expressed, that Mukhtar Pasha has adopted a very dangerous course in quitting his vantage ground above the passes and in provoking a conflict on open ground with troops so far superior to his own in training and equipment, if not in numbers. Nothing, I believe, but the most accurate information of the weakness of the enemy, both at home and in the field, could justify such a step, while as yet, I understand, his Excellency's assumptions are based upon the reports of Circassian scouts and spies only.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. KEMBALL.

P.S.—A report has reached Mukhtar Pasha of a Russian expedition, consisting of 3 battalions of infantry, 6 guns, and 3 troops of horse from Ardahan to disperse a body of new levies aggregating 5 battalions, which were being raised in the district of Livaneh, near Ardanush. The Russians effected their purpose after a conflict of five hours; but they are accused of then plundering the neighbouring villages, and of putting to death fifty persons, men, women, and children, in the three villages of Khartous, Sicheh, and Longatono, whose inhabitants had fired upon the Russian troops.

A. K.

No. 503.

Vice-Consul Sankey to Mr. Layard.—(*Received at the Foreign Office, July 28.*)

Kustendje, July 15, 1877.

Sir,

ON Friday morning at 9 o'clock the Kaïmakam received a telegram from Medjidieh that the Russians were marching on the town in force, and that the authorities and troops at Kustendje were to abandon the town and proceed to Varna in three steamers, which were in waiting at 12 the same night, as it was very unlikely that they could send them any more messages, as they intended retreating on Silistria with the eight battalions.

In conjunction with my colleagues and Captain Drummond, I organized a guard of the inhabitants, and Captain Drummond kindly stationed an officer and body of men in the town, so as to have a small body of disciplined men to fall back upon in case of attack. Everything passed off quietly. Yesterday Mr. Harris, accompanied by a guard of Bulgars, went on an engine to try and discover the whereabouts of the

* Two only supposed to be horsed.

† Five horsed.

Russians, and found them at Medjidieh, encamped on the ground occupied two days before by the Turks; there were about 40,000 under General Zimmermann. Mr. Harris had an interview with the General, who wished that the company should continue to run trains, and expressed his sorrow at finding all the villages abandoned and the houses open, with every sign of being pillaged. He further stated that it was not his wish or intention to occupy Kustendje, which was altogether out of the Russian line of operations, and that he did not like to leave a body of Russian troops in a place exposed to the sea, and consequently to a landing by Ottoman troops. However, considering the total abandonment of Kustendje by the Ottoman authorities, and that the town was full of Bulgars and Christians, he would send next morning a few Sotnias of Cossacks under an officer of trust named Mihutin.

The Cossacks have just arrived to the number of 2,000 and five guns. I had an opportunity of saying only a few words to the officer, as dense crowds were rushing in with flowers and presents. I shall see him again to-morrow, and if a Russian authority is established here the "Rapid" may leave at once. However, I shall leave this despatch open, as the post does not close till to-morrow at 11 A.M., and give your Excellency any further news of interest.

General Zimmermann says that the fight at Bjela lasted the whole day, and was favourable to the Turks, but that hostilities recommenced the next day, and that the Turks were defeated with great loss.

At Medjidieh the Cossacks nearly caught the Turkish General, Ali Riza Pasha, who was the last to retreat, and they lassoed a Bimbashi, who professes himself much astonished and disgusted at his mode of capture.

16th. The Cossacks are encamped some distance outside the town, and I have yet to find out the Commandant's intentions with regard to Kustendje. Captain Drummond notified to me verbally his intention of sailing for Varna this evening, and this is just the time that his presence is most required. It is to be hoped that Captain Drummond may be induced to alter his mind.

The Bulgars have been desecrating the mosque here and breaking into the houses of Turks who have left. Whatever they come across they break to pieces, and their friends seem to make no efforts to stop these proceedings. It was the same at Medjidieh until General Zimmermann put a stop to it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. F. SANKEY.

No. 504.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July 28.*)

(No. 809.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 20, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a letter from Commander Drummond, of Her Majesty's ship "Rapid," giving an account of the evacuation of Kustendji by the Turks, and of its occupation by the Russians.

Several of my colleagues begged me to thank Captain Drummond for the measures which he so promptly and efficiently took for the protection of foreign subjects and interests in Kustendji.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 504.

Commander Drummond to Mr. Layard.

"Rapid," Kustendje, July 16, 1877.

THE Russians arrived in front of Medjidieh on Thursday night, and took possession of it on Friday morning. The Turkish authorities remained till the last, and were nearly captured. The Russians, however, say that they only captured one Major and killed two men. General Zimmermann is in command of the army, and told Mr. Harris that he had about 40,000 men.

I went to Medjidieh yesterday, and saw General Zimmermann, who spoke of the "atrocities," and said that at all the places he had been to there had been no damages even done by the Turks, and in no places any personal outrages or murders. He said

that at Matchin the Turkish quarter had been destroyed by Bulgars and Roumans after the Turks left. He was rather severe on the Turkish conduct at Medjidieh, as he said that under the eyes of the Pasha the regular troops had broken the furniture and windows of the konak, but even that I believe to be Bulgarian work; for a woman, who had one of the best houses in Medjidieh, came in here on Friday, and said that the Bulgars had entered her house and broken everything.

I am told that at Matchin General Zimmermann was so angry at the conduct of the Bulgars that he refused to touch the offered bread and salt. In his conversation with me he said he wished of all things to get at the truth; and he said that opposite Galatz, some of his men who were killed had been cut about the face, but that the mutilation had been done after death. Altogether, in his conversation, I thought he gave a remarkable confirmation of my opinion that, under all circumstances, the Turks have withdrawn from this country after having stripped it of cattle, without committing any excesses or any unnecessary cruelty.

The Bulgars here yesterday morning went into the empty Turkish quarter and destroyed what they could find in the houses, and desecrated the mosque. At the request of the foreign Consuls I landed men and took charge of the town for two nights, but withdrew them yesterday morning, as I was told a regiment of Cossacks was coming. I hear that the Russians are not very well disposed towards the English. I believe the railway may be used by the Russians, as they are going to make some forts at Tchernavoda, otherwise it will be shut up.

The Russians have a gun-boat and a torpedo-boat at Tchernavoda, and they say they have been up as far as Silistria, which I doubt. I believe the Russians are going to advance on Tuesday; their determination, of course, I could not find out, but I do not think they are going to Varna.

No. 505.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 28.)

(No. 810.) *Therapia, July* 20, 1877.

My Lord,

IN the Constantinople papers, published in French, it is stated, with the sanction of the Government, that Batvan, a Mussulman village of 300 houses, between Tirnovo and Selvi, has been entirely destroyed, and its population of about 1,700 persons, men, women, and children, massacred by the Russians; that the villages of Kostowitz and Shemsikeui met with the same fate; and that the Mufti of a Mussulman village, named Batak, in the district of Tirnova, had gone out to meet the Russian vanguard, and had obtained from its commander an assurance that the inhabitants of the place would not be molested if they offered no resistance. These conditions were accepted, but were violated by the Russians, who killed the men, women, and children, who had taken refuge in a mosque. In all, eleven villages in the district of Tirnova are said to have been destroyed and their inhabitants massacred.

I have no means of ascertaining the truth of these statements.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—I have the honour to inclose extracts from the above-mentioned newspapers.

A. H. L.

Inclosure in No. 505.

Newspaper Extracts.

DANS le district de Tirnova, onze villages Musulmans ont été détruits, et leurs habitants massacrés. Nous avons, depuis Dimanche, reçu d'un de nos correspondants spéciaux, quatre télégrammes à ce sujet.

Les détails sont navrants et nous les abrégerons, ne citant que quelques-uns de ces onze villages:—

Batwan (situé entre Tirnovo et Selvi), se composait de 300 maisons. Trois seulement sont restées debout. Toute la population, composée d'environ 1,700 personnes, a été massacrée, sans que les femmes et les enfants aient été épargnés.

Koslowetz a subi le même sort, ainsi que Schemsikeuy, et à Batak le Mufti avait parlementé avec l'avant-garde Russe, et avait obtenu que la population aurait la vie sauve, moyennant qu'elle n'opposerait aucune résistance.

Ces conditions avaient eté acceptées de part et d'autre; elles ont été violées par l'ennemi, qui a massacré tous les habitants réfugiés dans la mosquée.

Télégramme adressé à Son Altesse le Grand Vizir, en date du 15 *Juillet*, 1877.

"Le Caïmacam de Rasgrad m'informe que les chirurgiens soignent les hommes et les femmes, au nombre de dix-sept personnes, qui ont été blessés lors du passage des Russes au village d'Aplanova, dépendance du Caza de Roustchouk.

"Parmi ces blessés se trouvent des enfants âgés de 3 à 10 ans. Voilà à quel point les Russes poussent leur cruauté et leur barbarie.

(Signé) "AHMED."

Les rapports des réfugiés blessés, habitants du village Herbeli, sont conformes aux détails relatés hier concernant les cruautés Russo-Bulgares. Le 11 Juillet, le village de Herbeli a été attaqué par des cavaliers Cosaques. La population de Herbeli s'élevait à 600 habitants Musulmans. Les femmes et les enfants furent outragés et massacrés, les habitations détruites et brûlées par des projectiles. Les habitants ne purent sauver la moindre chose, pas même leurs vêtements. Des femmes ont reçu des blessures atroces. Des enfants de 5 ans ont été percés à coups de lance. Les coups étaient principalement dirigés sur le dos, ce qui indique que ces malheureuses créatures étaient frappés tandis qu'elles cherchaient à fuir.

Herbeli est situé dans le district de Sistova, sur la rive opposée de la Jantra. Dans ces villages il y avait aussi des familles Tartares qui ont échappé les premières aux massacres.

No. 506.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 28.)

(No. .)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 28, 1877.

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday as to readiness of Emperor of Russia to treat for peace, do you wish me to act in the matter?

I could, if you thought fit, sound the Sultan.

No. 507.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.) *Foreign Office, July* 28, 1877, 3·20 P.M.

YOU are authorized to sound the Sultan as to possible terms of peace. Her Majesty's Government are not disposed to take the initiative in proposing conditions, but the Sultan may rely on their friendly offices with a view to obtain the most favourable terms possible under the circumstances, if he is disposed to open negotiations.

No. 508.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, July* 28, 1877, 3·35 P.M.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 389 of July 17, you may give passports in cases of necessity to Turkish subjects, but you should be careful to describe the bearers as Turkish subjects, and to state in the passport that it is given to enable them to return to Turkey.

No. 509.

Mr. Plunkett to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 29.)

(No. 203.)
My Lord, *Washington, July* 16, 1877.

HAVING seen in the newspapers a notice that the steamer "Niagara" would not, as previously advertised, carry the next mail from New York to Cuba, I wrote privately to Her Majesty's Consul-General in that city on the 12th instant, requesting him to inquire discreetly whether the withdrawal of this steamer from her ordinary mail duties was in any way connected with the prospect of her sale to the Russian Government. This had already been often hinted at, and equally often denied.

I have now the honour to inclose copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Archibald, reporting that Mr. J. W. Houston, the Vice-President of the Pacific Mail Company, carried over lately to England, and showed to the Russian Ambassador there, drawings of the steamers "Saratoga" and "Niagara," which Mr. Roach desired to sell to the Russians.

Mr. Houston's visit to London is kept a profound secret, and the result is not yet known.

I have forwarded the substance of Mr. Archibald's information to your Lordship by telegraph to-day, and I have also telegraphed to Her Majesty's Consul at San Francisco to inform me, by wire, whether Admiral Crown, during his late visit to California, had any dealings with the officers of the Pacific Mail Company.

I shall not fail to keep your Lordship fully informed of any particulars which I can glean on this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. W. PLUNKETT.

P.S.—Since writing the above, my attention has been called to the inclosed printed description of the "Saratoga," the sister ship to the "Niagara." I regret to say that I am unable to procure more than the one copy.

F. W. P.

Inclosure 1 in No. 509.

Consul-General Archibald to Mr. Plunkett.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *New York, July* 14, 1877.

IN April last some unofficial correspondence took place between Sir Edward Thornton and myself, in reference to the rumoured building of certain vessels by Mr. John Roach, an eminent American shipbuilder, ostensibly for the Mediterranean trade, but with the ulterior purpose of being used for war purposes by the Russian Government. This rumour subsequently appeared to be without sufficient foundation.

I have, however, within the last two days, learnt from a source which I believe to be trustworthy, that Mr. J. B. Houston, lately, and still reputed to be, Vice-President of the Pacific Mail Steam-ship Company (although actually working with and for Roach, with the understanding and consent of the Company), a short time since carried with him to London, and laid before the Russian Ambassador there, full and complete drawings and plans of the new steamers "Saratoga" and "Niagara," constructed by Roach. Before going abroad he saw the Russian Minister at Washington on the same subject, and again on his return. He has since left New York, for Australia, on the business of the Pacific Mail Company.

No secret has been made of the fact that Roach intended to sell, if he could, the two ships above named to the Russian Government. But a report got abroad that the Russian Government was to have something to do with the Pacific Mail Company. This report was stifled, and Houston's interviews with the Russian Minister are supposed to be a great secret. What the result of the negotiation will be is not yet apparent.

The "Niagara" is about 2,100 tons burthen, 290 feet long, has high-pressure compound engines, 34 inches, by 4 feet 6 inches, and a speed of 14 knots. She is well built (for one of Roach's ships), and a few frames and beams would enable her to carry guns sufficient to make her a formidable privateer. The "Saratoga" is a sister ship.

I learn that the effort to sell the "Stevens Battery" to the Russian Government has completely failed. The matter had been placed in the hands of speculators, for the purpose of effecting such sale; but an engineer at Philadelphia took pains to expose the scheme to the Russian officers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. M. ARCHIBALD.

Inclosure 2 in No. 509.

Extract from the "New York Times" of July 14, 1877.

THE STEAM-SHIP "SARATOGA."—The steam-ship "Saratoga," which was launched at Chester, Pensylvania, in May last, from the yard of John Roach and Son, reached this city on Thursday, and was yesterday taken to the foot of East Ninth-street, where she will be upholstered, her wood-finishings put in, and her general fit-out provided, when she will be put on the Havana Line with the "Niagara" and "Carondelet." She is in every respect equal to the "Niagara" in size, and will be finished in equally complete style. She is of iron, 292 feet long, 38 feet broad, 23 feet deep, and has a capacity of 2,205 tons. The propeller, 14 feet in diameter, and makes 75 revolutions per minute. The vessel is provided with three decks, five water-tight compartments, a compound engine of 1,650 horse-power, and four boilers, which will carry 80 pounds of steam to the square inch. Her estimated speed is 13½ knots an hour. She has a steam steering apparatus, steam windlass and hoisting machinery, and abundant room for coal storage. She is brigantine rigged, and can carry 2,500 feet of canvas. Her cabin will accommodate about 60 first-class passengers. She will be commanded by Captain Sundberg, and will make her first trip from this port on July 26.

No. 510.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 29.)

(No. 307.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 28, 1877.

COLONEL LENNOX telegraphed to me from Yeni-Zaghra yesterday to the following effect:—

It appears from inquiries which he has made in concert with Raouf Pasha, and upon personal examination of inhabitants of five villages, that when Russians enter a Turkish village they force Mahometans to give up their arms, which are immediately handed over to the Bulgarians, who proceed to commit most terrible atrocities, violating women, killing men and even little children and burning the villages.

Colonel Lennox himself spoke to a Turk whose two children had been massacred. These acts are committed with connivance of the Russians. The Bulgarians carry off the cattle belonging to the Mussulmans. The Circassians have also carried off large quantity of sheep and cattle in order to save them from the Russians, which Raouf Pasha has sent to Adrianople.

No. 511.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 29.)

(No. 308.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July* 28, 1877.

PORTE has communicated to me following telegram from the Governor-General of Janina:—

"Greek Government has given orders to complete the frontier regiments by calling out the reserve. A battery, with cavalry and infantry, has been sent in the direction of Anadin. Besides the frontier forces there is a battalion at Virchor and one at Messolonghi, which latter is about to join the former. The Greeks being about to cross the frontier and advance upon some of the ports opposite Corfu, have ordered their two ironclads at Corfu to co-operate. Italian Consul has ordered the flotilla from

Brindisi to prevent Greek invasion of Turkish territory extending from Durazzò to (name not certain). Authorities at Yeni-Sheir state that the inhabitants of Arnivro and other places have been summoned to Greece; that the reserves are being called out and drafted and volunteers collected."

No. 512.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 29.)

(No. 309.) *Constantinople, July* 28, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

CONSUL READE has sent official accounts of atrocities committed by the Russians upon the Mussulman women and children, and gives names of eighteen whom he has personally examined. Other victims are being brought into Schumla daily, and Consul Reade has no doubt that the outrages he describes have been committed by the Russians and not by the Bulgarians. A considerable number of women and children must, he thinks, have been killed on the spot. His dispatches on this subject will go home by messenger.

I have received further and apparently authentic details from the Porte of the destruction of the Mussulman villages and outrages on their inhabitants by Cossacks and Bulgarians in the country between Adrianople and Philippopoli.

No. 513.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 29.)

Vienna, July 28, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

ON calling to-day at the Turkish Embassy, I was informed that Midhat Pasha had arrived, and that the Ambassador had gone to see him.

No. 514.

Consul Watkins to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 30.)

Larnaca, July 10, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHAS. WATKINS.

Inclosure in No. 514.

Consul Watkins to Mr. Layard.

Larnaca, July 10, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that a brutal assault was committed a few days ago against three of the leading Christian inhabitants of the district of Baffo by a Turkish official charged with the collection of taxes there.

This intelligence was at first communicated by the Greek Agent at Baffo to the Greek Consul here, who was kind enough to bring it at once to my knowledge; and in my turn, I did not fail to address on the subject an official telegram to his Excellency Ahmed Pasha, Governor of the Island, who sent me in reply a telegram in Turkish, of which I inclose a copy. Your Excellency will notice that one of the men died soon after from the wounds he received. The lives of the other two men, one of whom, according to the report of the Turkish Consular Agent, was hanged by the waist for some hours, are in danger.

I have written on the subject to Vice-Consul Loiso, of Limassol, who has taken the necessary measures to inquire into the case, and send me a report, upon the receipt of which I will do myself the honour to address your Excellency again, with fuller details. It is needless to convey to your Excellency the excitement and consternation into

which these acts of violence have drawn the already panic-stricken Christian population of the district of Baffo.

The ex-brigand Paraskevà, a Greek, who had escaped from prison two years ago, to which he had been committed for a term of fifteen years for his participation as an accomplice in the murder of the Maltese, Antonio Carnana, was captured one day last week by a body of zapticks, pinioned, and shot dead on the way to Nicosia. I have it on good authority that he was shot because he had on his person a matter of about 200 napoleons, of which he was stripped by his capturers, and not because he had made an attempt to run away.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHAS. WATKINS.

No. 515.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 30.)

(No. 90. Political.) *Belgrade, July* 13, 1877.

My Lord,

There is very little of general interest in the proceedings of the Servian "Skoupstchina" now sitting at Kragouiévatz.

In reply to the Prince's speech, an address was voted repeating almost His Highness' words, approving both the late war and the peace which followed it, and when alluding to the Prince's visit to Ploiesti, speaking in terms of extreme adulation of the Emperor Alexander as the "Liberator" of the Slavs.

Some opposition manifested itself amongst a section of the Assembly to that portion of the address which referred to the war, and the minority, consisting of a combination of Conservative and Radical members, drew up a different project of address, in which the same Slavonic aspirations and equally strong and flattering expressions as regards the Russian Protectorate are to be found, but which laid particular stress on the misery caused by the war and spoke disapprovingly of the manner in which it had been conducted, expressing regret that Servia is now crippled and powerless to cooperate in the decisive struggle.

The two parties give such contradictory accounts of the discussion that followed, that it is impossible to know which way the feelings of the Assembly went. The President declared that the show of hands was in favour of the Ministerial project, but it is asserted that he declined taking down the votes of the members and subsequently the Address supported by the Government received the signatures of 102 out of the 116 members present.

Such a result appeared at first as a complete Ministerial triumph, and one could naturally suppose that the minority was reduced to fourteen members, but three days later the news reached Belgrade that thirty-six Deputies had voluntarily resigned their seats.

Their object in adopting this extreme course appears to have been to force the Government to dissolve. According to § 82 of the Constitution, "the presence of three-fourths of the members is necessary to enable the Assembly to vote."

The Assembly consists of 133 Deputies, *i.e.*, 100 members elected and 33 appointed ones, so that this secession rendered its sittings inoperative.

The indignation in Government circles was very great at this proceeding on the part of the Opposition, and it was even reported that legal proceedings would be adopted against the resigning members so as to render their re-election impossible.

The new elections are to be held at once, and I shall not fail to report their result in a later despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

P.S.—As the project of an address drawn up by the Opposition may have some interest, I have the honour to inclose a French translation of it.

Its circulation at Belgrade has been prohibited.

W. A. W.

Inclosure in No. 515.

Project of Address by Opposition in answer to Prince Milan's Speech.

(Traduction.)
Monseigneur,

JAMAIS jusqu'à ce jour l'Assemblée Nationale ne s'est réunie, dans des circonstances aussi sérieuses et aussi graves.

En premier lieu elle salue son auguste Souverain avec le dévouement dont elle a toujours fait preuve et elle est heureuse de pouvoir le féliciter d'avoir reçu un fils et d'avoir aussi donné un héritier au trône de Serbie. L'affermissement sur ce trône de la glorieuse dynastie des Obrenovitch a toujours été pour le peuple Serbe la plus grande garantie d'un avenir plus heureux. L'Assemblée Nationale, au nom du peuple Serbe, salue le Prince héritier, avec les sentiments les plus purs de fidélité et d'attachement.

L'Assemblée Nationale est heureuse d'avoir entendu votre Altesse elle-même, constater avec quelle fermeté et quels sacrifices le peuple Serbe a supporté l'immense fardeau de la guerre, dans une lutte contre un ennemi de beaucoup plus puissant. Cette fermeté et cette abnégation du peuple Serbe témoignent de la façon la plus éclatante que le peuple Serbe est toujours fidèle à sa mission, et qu'il est toujours prêt à contribuer de toutes ses forces à l'accomplissement de la tâche qui lui est dévolue.

C'est à ce titre—car l'histoire ne pourra parler qu'avec éloge pour les Serbes—c'est à ce titre que le peuple Serbe a le droit de compter que son sang n'aura pas coulé inutilement, et qu'il servira à assurer un avenir plus heureux et pour lui et pour les Serbes opprimés.

En même temps l'Assemblée Nationale est heureuse de voir, par le discours du trône, qu'on ne s'en prend pas au peuple Serbe pour les insuccès de notre armée dans la dernière guerre. La supériorité numérique de l'ennemi, et surtout, l'isolement de la Serbie, la mauvaise organisation militaire, et le mauvais état des finances, avant l'entrée en campagne, sont les principales causes d'insuccès.

Autant le peuple Serbe se réjouit de voir la destinée des Chrétiens d'Orient, livrée en de plus puissantes mains, autant il est affligé en pensant, que sans cette entrée en campagne prématurée il pourrait aujourd'hui déployer dignement ses drapeaux à côté des drapeaux glorieux de l'Empereur Libérateur. Il regrette que la Serbie se soit lancée, sans aucun appui, dans cette lutte qui a épuisé ses forces et qui l'a mise dans la nécessité de voir aujourd'hui—en témoin impuissant—se dérouler des événements qui assurément sont du plus haut intérêt pour la destinée de Serbes d'Orient.

Regrettant que par sa politique extérieure, la Serbie se soit isolée des autres populations, l'Assemblée Nationale ne peut s'empêcher d'examiner avec la plus vive attention la situation intérieure qui, à la suite de cette campagne, est devenue l'objet des plus graves soucis.

La dette de l'Etat, l'épuisement des finances, la commerce, l'industrie, et l'agriculture arrêtés, les départements limitrophes dévastés, les villages et les villes réduites en cendres, les orphelins sans toit et sans pain, la famine même n'épargnant pas certaines parties du pays—tous ces malheurs rappelleront à chaque instant, et de la façon la plus impérieuse, que le devoir le plus urgent et le plus sacré pour l'Assemblée est le suivant: aider la Serbie à sortir le plus tôt possible de cette situation difficile, et à reconquérir le plus tôt possible sa place au milieu des nations heureux. Convaincue de la générosité et du patriotisme de son Prince, l'Assemblée Nationale sait que votre Altesse ne permettra à personne de s'écarter à cette voie—voie dans laquelle votre Altesse trouvera toujours chez les représentants du peuple l'empressement le plus vif et l'appui le plus sincère.

Mais pour l'accomplissement de cette tâche, qui par son énormité sort de la catégorie des travaux ordinaires du Gouvernement, l'Assemblée Nationale est persuadée qu'on a besoin du concours de toutes les capacités, qu'il est nécessaire d'entendre toutes les déclarations, qu'il ne faut dédaigner le tribut d'aucune intelligence. C'est ainsi seulement, en réunissant toutes ces forces, et guidée par le plus sincère patriotisme, que l'Assemblée Nationale croit pouvoir rapidement et efficacement apporter un soulagement réel à la nation et au pays; et pour accomplir cette tâche les conditions essentielles sont la tranquillité du pays et la libre entente.

Dans cette ordre d'idées l'Assemblée Nationale croit qu'en raison des sacrifices immenses imposés au peuple pendant cette guerre, il est injuste d'avoir maintenu, une fois la paix conclue, et de prolonger l'état de siége dans le pays, et elle est persuadée que le Prince partagera complètement son avis, et qu'il mettra fin le plus tôt possible

à cette situation anormale; en un mot, qu'il rétablira l'état des choses tel qu'il était avant la guerre, pour ramener la confiance mutuelle et la sécurité dans le pays.

Dans ce même ordre d'idées l'Assemblée Nationale prie le Prince de vouloir bien, en vue de cette union et de cette concorde mutuelle, faire usage de sa magnanimité, et libérer de leurs peines ceux qui, depuis le commencement de la guerre jusqu'à ce jour, ont été condamnés pour délits politiques et militaires. Unis de cette façon nous aiderons mieux la Serbie à se remettre sur ses pieds.

Toujours animés des plus vifs sentiments de reconnaissance et de respect à l'égard du puissant Empereur de Russie, le peuple Serbe se convient toujours de l'appui que la Serbie a reçu à différentes reprises de la Russie. Il se rappelle avec reconnaissance le secours qui lui a été fourni dans la dernière guerre, et il est surtout profondément reconnaissant lorsqu'il se rappelle qu'au moment du plus grand danger il a été sauvé de l'invasion Turque uniquement et exclusivement par la puissante main de l'Empereur de Russie.

C'est pourquoi l'Assemblée Nationale vous remercie, Monseigneur, d'avoir bien volu vous charger d'assurer vous-même Sa Majesté l'Empereur de Russie de l'éternelle reconnaissance du peuple Serbe.

L'Assemblée Nationale se rejouit de savoir que votre Altesse a été pendant son séjour en Roumanie l'objet d'un accueil flatteur de la part de Sa Majesté.

L'attention paternelle que Sa Majesté n'a cessé de prodiguer au peuple Serbe nous donne la plus solide garantie d'une destinée plus heureuse pour la Serbie.

Remerciant, enfin, votre Altesse d'avoir bien voulu ouvrir nos travaux, nous nous écrions pleines de confiance et de foi dans l'avenir heureux de la Serbie.

Vive le Prince de Serbie, &c.

No. 516.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 93. Political.)
My Lord, *Belgrade, July 14, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the accompanying copy of instructions which I have drawn up for Mr. Vice-Consul Marshall when sending him on a visit to Widdin and its neighbourhood.

I have handed these to him subject to any addition or alteration which your Lordship may be pleased to instruct me to make in them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 516.

Consul-General White to Vice-Consul Marshall.

Sir, *Belgrade, July 14, 1877.*

IN conformity with telegrams received from the Foreign Office, I have to instruct you to proceed at once to Widdin.

Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, having been informed that you are to be sent there, has kindly promised that you shall be recommended to all proper Ottoman authorities.

On your way you will pass through Saitschar, where you will find an Englishman, Mr. Baker, employed in benevolent objects; through him, and through the intervention of the local frontier authorities, you will be able, I trust, to make arrangements for the safe and speedy conveyance of your correspondence and telegrams from Widdin to the nearest Serbian station.

It will be desirable that even a great part of your official correspondence with me should be in cypher, and I believe you have been provided with one at the Foreign Office; it is to be preserved with due care in your keeping, and in case of danger it had better be destroyed than fall into unsafe and unauthorized hands.

The object of your mission is to obtain for Her Majesty's Government reliable and trustworthy information on military and other objects as to what is going on in that part of Bulgaria which cannot be got elsewhere.

Provided with recommendations from Constantinople, you will no doubt find it

easy to establish good terms with the different authorities with whom you may come in contact, and by that means to put together a good deal of most valuable information, and the nature of what is required will suggest itself at once to a gentleman of your military acquirements.

Should you have any opportunity to ascertain anything about the resources of the country or thefeelings of its inhabitants, you will no doubt notice them, and if you obtain copies of any Laws or Decrees published by the invading army it would be desirable they should be forwarded here. Should you hear reports of any excesses committed by either of the belligerents, I am sure you will spare no pains to ascertain the real facts, though I know by experience how difficult it is to arrive at the truth amidst the passions and confusion which are, alas! too sure to prevail in Bulgaria.

It is possible that I may have to ask you to extend your excursion as far as Nisch, or even, perhaps, Sofia, but until I receive further instructions you will have to remain stationed at or near Widdin and its neighbourhood, as important military events are expected there, taking care, however, that you should not expose your person or run the risk of being shut up in Widdin in case of an investment of that place.

As an officer in Her Majesty's service, you will please bear in mind that you belong to a neutral State, and that you hold at the same time, though temporarily, a civil appointment; that you have, therefore, to abstain from any act which would mix you up with either belligerent, and might impair your efficiency in the public service for further duties which it may devolve on me to assign to you later during your connection with this Agency and Consulate-General.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 517.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 94. Political.)
My Lord, *Belgrade, July 16, 1877.*

DURING the last three months the Porte has been repeatedly suspicious of the conduct of Servia, and has found abundant reason for this, both in the past conduct of the Government of the Principality and in many alarming reports which found but a too welcome publicity in the Hungarian press.

At one time it was said that there was great military activity in Servia, at another that preparations were going on at Kladova for the crossing of Russian troops into Servia.

It was my duty on these several occasions to contradict the above rumours; and it may have appeared to the Ottoman authorities that I was assuming too great a responsibility, and my language may have been mistaken on those occasions as corroborating to too great an extent the assurances which M. Christitch, the Servian Agent at Constantinople, had been instructed to give by his Government.

Facts have hitherto borne out my assertions. Whilst I was only reporting what was actually passing before my eyes, I did not conceal from your Lordship, as long ago as May 25 (despatch No. 64, Political), that it was expected that ere long this Principality would be dragged into war.

In a subsequent despatch (No. 68, Political), dated June 6, whilst denying the alleged extent of Servian preparations, I expressly stated that, however small, "they do not exclude hostile designs whenever a more favourable opportunity should present itself."

Within the last few days I have some reason to fear that a change for the worse has come over the rulers of this country, and though the indications are but slight as yet, and the Prince and his Ministers are absent from the capital, several usually well-informed persons are of opinion that we are approaching a moment when Servia will again assume an attitude of open defiance towards the Porte.

At no time during my residence here have I relied upon the reverence for international obligations as a sufficient guarantee against an appeal to arms on the part of Servia.

The last Speech of Prince Milan and the projected Addresses in reply to it—both those of the majority and of the opposition—bear evidence of a total disregard of any sort of recognition of suzerain rights in the Porte; but, on the contrary, they contain

expressions proving that considerable hopes are entertained that the war now going on between Russia and Turkey will be conducive to advantages for the Servian nation, and that great reliance is placed on the powerful protection of the Emperor of Russia.

The example of Roumania, and the advance of the Russian army across Bulgaria, have naturally produced their effect here; the dread of an Austrian military occupation has likewise diminished, on account of the hesitation which is ascribed to that Cabinet, and which, I daresay, in reality is only apparent.

Two causes continue to restrain Servia from open defiance of the Porte.

The first of these is the exhausted condition of the Exchequer and the unwillingness of the people to embark in any martial enterprise.

The second and the principal one is the desire not to do anything without the previous assent of Russia.

Should, however, the progress of Russian arms be such as to clear the road of Turkish troops in the districts conterminous to Servia, it is thought that the militia might easily, and without incurring any danger, occupy some places on Turkish soil to which they fancy they have some traditional claim.

Should the report be confirmed that Montenegro is resuming the offensive, this would act as a strong inducement here to co-operate with that rival dynasty in cutting off Bosnia by effecting a junction on the ridge of hills which constitute the south-west limits of that province.

This would be the resumption of the original plan of campaign which was to have been followed at the commencement of the late war, and was subsequently abandoned.

The calling out of the first class of the militia would take very little time and occasion little expense. Ammunition is, I hear, being collected within the last few days at some frontier points.

The preparations would probably be very scanty, nor would anything be done as long as a Turkish force occupies Widdin; hence a great difficulty in ascertaining if anything is intended after all, nor is it possible to guess what passes in the secret messages sent from here to Bucharest, and if Russia will consent to a Servian advance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 518.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 8. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, July 15, 1877.*

HAVING several purchases to make, I arrived here yesterday from the Imperial head-quarters at Simnitza.

I shall return to-morrow morning, and expect to find the Emperor at Tsarevitsa.

To-day I called on Prince Gortchakow. His Highness received me with great kindness, and expressed his pleasure at the reception I had met with at head-quarters.

Prince Gortchakow hoped that your Lordship and Her Majesty's Government had been made aware of the manner in which the Emperor had welcomed me, and begged me to inform your Lordship that I meet with universal civility from the members of the Imperial Staff, which is certainly the case.

His Highness then told me confidentially the news which had reached him of an intended Turkish crossing into Roumania from Silistria.

I begged Colonel Mansfield to telegraph this intelligence to your Lordship.

Prince Gortchakow went on to say that the news from England was not very satisfactory.

His Highness said that there had been dissensions in the English Cabinet, and that there appeared to be an idea of addressing another protest to the Imperial Government against any attack on Constantinople, a measure the use of which Prince Gortchakow said he failed to see.

The Prince also told me that the party in the Government who wished to ask Parliament for a credit had been defeated mainly owing to the decided language of Lord Salisbury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Prince Gortchakow evidently entertains no hopes of peace on this side of the Balkans.

He said that he had determined in no way to interfere with the military plans until a certain point had been reached, but that when the time came he would insist upon his voice being heard.

With regard to Constantinople, his Highness repeated that neither he nor the Emperor would ever hear of its remaining in Russian hands, but it was evident that he foresees the possibility, if not the probability, of the temporary occupation of that capital by Russian troops.

"The question of an occupation of Constantinople by Russia," said his Highness, "depends very much upon England.

"When we arrive at Adrianople, England will have an opportunity of rendering immense services—late if you will—in the interests of peace; but as long as the British fleet is in Besika Bay, so long will the Turks hope for British assistance."

I told Prince Gortchakow that I feared that the military feeling now awakened might prove difficult to control.

His Highness replied that he had also entertained grave doubts as to the influence of the military element on the Emperor, but that he had lately had several proofs that His Majesty has not allowed himself to be carried away by military pressure.

Prince Gortchakow believed that the Roumanian army would endeavour to cross the Danube, on the distinct understanding that all Roumanian troops south of that river should come under the orders of the Russian military authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRED. WELLESLEY.

No. 519.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 9. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Imperial Head-quarters, Bjela, Bulgaria, July 23, 1877.*

YOUR Lordship will have received my telegram of the 20th instant announcing the capture by the Russians of the Shipka Pass, and giving an idea of the military operations which preceded it.

This important event, and especially the ease with which it was accomplished, was hailed with the utmost delight by the Emperor and his staff.

There was, however, one exception, namely, General Ignatiew, who was evidently alarmed at the unexpected rapidity of the Russian advance.

I saw directly that his Excellency feared that so sudden and easy a victory might lead to plain speaking, if not to immediate action, on the part of Great Britain.

He begged me to impress on Her Majesty's Government the fact that if European complications are to be avoided the moment has arrived for England to induce the Porte to make overtures of peace, overtures which, if couched in suitable language, his Excellency assured me the Emperor would be glad to entertain.

Again and again did General Ignatiew request me to telegraph in this sense to your Lordship.

I told his Excellency that I could not take upon myself such a responsibility without the orders of the Emperor, but that if His Majesty were directly, or through General Ignatiew, to authorize me to send a telegram in this sense to your Lordship, I should be only too happy to do so.

General Ignatiew then went to the Emperor's tent, and in about twenty minutes returned, and authorized me in His Majesty's name to inform your Lordship that notwithstanding recent successes the Emperor was still of the same peaceful dispositions, and ready to treat for peace if "suitable" propositions were made by the Sultan.

I embodied the substance of the above in a cypher despatch to your Lordship on the 20th instant.

Now that the Russians are virtually masters of the Balkans there appear to be only two courses open to them, that is if the Turks refuse to make peace, and withdraw their field army to the walls of Constantinople.

The one is to march on Constantinople at all hazards, and the other to advance as far as Adrianople only, and from thence appeal to Europe to force the Porte to come to terms, whereby Russia would prove the sincerity of her protestations with regard to the Turkish capital.

If Europe, however, were, in the latter case, to fail in persuading the Turks to commence negotiations, Russia would repudiate the responsibility of a march to Constantinople, which would then become inevitable, provided, of course, that Russian successes continue.

Whether the Emperor would be powerful enough, or have the moral courage, to stop a young and victorious army within so short a distance of the prize coveted by every Russian, it is impossible to say.

Judging, however, from the general spirit at head-quarters I entertain great doubts on the subject.

Policy and respect for the interests of other countries appear to have vanished entirely from the mind of the Emperor, who is entirely absorbed in military events of even daily occurrence.

In my humble opinion this is a danger which should not be lost sight of, for Russia is essentially a military nation, and one in which, under present circumstances, military honour has more weight than considerations of policy and solemn assurances.

Only yesterday General Ignatiew begged me again to impress on your Lordship that the time had arrived when England should bring her influence to bear on the Porte in favour of peace, and added that the dream of the Grand Duke Nicholas and of those who surround him is "de faire célébrer la messe dans l'Eglise de Sainte Sophie."

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRED. WELLESLEY.

No. 520.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 605.)
My Lord, *Vienna, July 20, 1877.*

IN reply to a telegram which I received this evening from your Lordship respecting the wishes of the Porte to learn whether Her Majesty's Government have received any information as to Austrian preparations for the invasion of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, I have the honour to state that Major Gonne is not aware of any further additions having been made to the Austrian forces on the frontiers of these provinces than those mentioned in his report, which I forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 551 of the 28th ultimo.

He is also of opinion that no occupation of Turkish territory will take place without the mobilization of a part of the army, and he believes all other preparations for every possible eventuality to have been long since made.

It appears to me, with reference to this subject, that the material guarantees spoken of in Count Andrassy's despatch to Count Beust of the 22nd ultimo, can, when taken with the context, only mean an occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina; but I do not pretend to know when the Government will consider it necessary to adopt measures for the protection of their interests.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 521.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 607.)
My Lord, *Vienna, July 21, 1877.*

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's despatch No. 248 of the 18th instant, inclosing a copy of a letter from Colonel Stokes relative to the sinking of barges filled with stones in the Sulina branch of the Danube; and I beg to explain, with reference to Colonel Stokes' report, and to my despatch No. 602 of the 19th instant on the same subject, that when Baron Orczy stated to me that the Austro-Hungarian Government are of opinion that the deepened bed of the Sulina branch of

the river should be held to form a part of the neutralized works of the Commission, he took the view which Colonel Stokes has expressed as to a right to neutrality not having been extended to the waters of the channel.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 522.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 609.)
My Lord, *Vienna, July 21, 1877.*

WITH reference to the subject of preparations said to be made by the Austro-Hungarian Government for the immediate occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, I forward to your Lordship by to-day's post a report from Her Majesty's Consul at Ragusa, stating that military preparations of every kind are being made in Dalmatia, where munitions of war or provisions are landed from every steamer passing down the coast, and that the military stations are being fortified.

Mr. St. John also states that 800 mules have been collected between Ragusa and Klek, and that the troops have received orders to be ready for active service.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 523.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 620.)
My Lord, *Vienna, July 26, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 251 of the 18th instant, I have acquainted Count Andrassy with the arrangements made by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople for the protection, by the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Rapid," of Austrian subjects who might be in danger at Kustendji, in consequence of the advance of Russian troops on that place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 524.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 626.)
My Lord, *Vienna, July 26, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 379 of the 11th instant, relative to measures taken by the Russian military authorities to close the Sulina branch of the Danube, I have acquainted the Austro-Hungarian Government with the steps which your Lordship has authorized Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh and the British Commissioner at Sulina to take, with a view to protect the channel of the river from the serious injury to which it has been exposed.

I also allowed Baron Calice, in a late interview which I had with him, to read Colonel Stokes' report on the subject, of which a copy was inclosed in your Lordship's despatch; and Count Andrassy, having learnt from him Colonel Stokes' opinions, subsequently expressed to me great concern on the subject, and his intention to endeavour to induce the Russian Government to assent to immediate measures being taken to prevent the disastrous consequences which may result from the proceedings of their military authorities.

I have since been informed by Baron Schwegel, the Director of the Commercial Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, that he is preparing a despatch to be addressed to the Russian Government, showing how serious these consequences may be, and suggesting that orders should be given for the immediate removal of the barges which have been sunk in the river; and Baron Schwegel having therefore requested me to communicate to him confidentially Colonel Stokes' report, which he believes to be entirely corroborated by one from the Engineer of the Commission, I

have sent it to him, on the understanding that it is not to be referred to in the Austrian despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 525.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 13. Political. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Corfu, July 26, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to state that, since the date of my report No. 12, Political, of the 12th instant, I have received various communications from St. Maura, relative to the unceasing efforts of the Russo-Greek Committee in that quarter to organize an insurrectionary movement on the frontiers of Epirus and Thessaly, under the leadership of Colonel Grivas.

In order to be ready to take advantage of any favourable opportunity that might have presented itself during the last few months, Grivas avoided taking his seat in the Greek Parliament, of which he is a member, during the last ordinary and extraordinary Sessions.

He has all the Acarnanians at his beck—a formidable array.

2. The Turks are using every exertion to place Prevesa in a state of defence. The important position of Arta is not likely to be overlooked on the occasion, as it commands the line of the Arachthus, and offers the most formidable barrier against an attack on Epirus from the Greek side.

3. The life and soul of the movement here in Corfu is Colonel Becker, who distinguished himself as one of General Tchernaieff's aide-de-camps during the late Servian insurrection.

4. By the Greek mail of the 23rd instant, a remittance of 25,000 Spanish dollars arrived from the Revolutionary Committee in Athens, to be at the disposal of Colonel Becker, for the purpose of organizing revolt in Chimara, and the neighbouring parts of Upper Albania, a quarter from which I am without any tidings since the date of my last report.

5. What I know for certain is that Russian money is being lavishly spent here in the shape of charitable donations, and dowries to poor maidens, to the great increase of Russian popularity of course.

6. The close intimacy which has for some time subsisted between the Russian and Italian Consulates attracts general remark.

7. The organization of the Greek army reserves, of the first and second categories, drags its slow length along. The scheme is not popular among the Ionians, who, over all, are supremely disgusted by the late measure of the Government respecting the forced circulation of the paper currency. In Cephalonia, ever the hot-bed of discontent and of all revolutionary demonstrations, I am informed that a manifesto is in preparation, expository of the advantages and privileges the islands enjoyed under the British Protectorate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

No. 526.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 206. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, July 28, 1877.*

YOUR Lordship's speech on Thursday, 19th instant, in the House of Lords has produced a favourable impression, and has given great satisfaction in Ministerial circles at Berlin.

It is reported from Varzin that Prince Bismarck has enunciated his concurrence in the views expressed on that occasion by your Lordship, and that he also thinks the neutral Powers will be able to interfere with more influence and effect when the war is over and the belligerents exhausted by the contest, than if they made a premature attempt at interference or mediation.

Prince Bismarck told the Austrian Ambassador that if the mediation of Germany should at the end of the war be solicited by the belligerents or the neutral Powers it would not be withheld, but, that he would not offer it spontaneously.

The report from Constantinople that the German Government have proffered their good services to the Porte is said here to be unfounded, but it is not thought impossible that the Porte may apply to Germany in the first instance for advice.

In his despatches Nos. 750 and 751, Secret, of the 10th instant, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople gives an account of the German Ambassador's proceedings, and states his belief that Prince Reuss is working to get the Porte to accept a peace highly favourable to Russia.

Mr. Layard is, no doubt, correct in the view he takes of his German colleague's policy, who is not only devoted to the cause of Russia, after a long residence at St. Petersburgh, but who is also related to the Russian as well as to the German Imperial family, and in personal private correspondence both with the Czar and with the Emperor, whose Russian sympathies are well known, so that Prince Reuss, animated by a desire to realize the wishes of his Imperial relations, has very likely been led to exceed the instructions given to him by the German Chancellor.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 527.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 30.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 29 Juillet,* 1877.

SON Excellence Réouf Pacha nous télégraphie que, dans leur retraite de Yeni-Zaghra, les Russes ont massacré 345 Musulmans de sept villages dépendant d'Eski-Zaghra; deux ou trois familles ont pu seules échapper au massacre, et sont allées porter leur gémissement à Raouf Pacha.

No. 528.

Memorandum communicated by Count Schouvaloff, July 30, 1877.

DES dépêches officielles de Constantinople communiquées à l'Agence Havas signalent à la conscience publique de prétendues atrocités commises par les troupes Russes en Europe et en Asie, et qui auraient été rapportées par les autorités Ottomanes.

Tout en opposant le démenti le plus catégorique à ces allégations mensongères par lesquelles notre ennemi cherche à se venger de la perte de positions importantes, nous croyons devoir relever une inexactitude frappante des accusations de la Sublime Porte. Les autorités locales ne pouvaient pas lui signaler des faits commis par les troupes Russes en Europe, vû qu'à l'approche de ces dernières tout vestige de fonctionnaires Ottomans avait disparu avec la presque totalité des habitants Musulmans. A commencer par Sistovo, nous trouvâmes par tout les quartiers et villages Turcs abandonnés par les habitants qui emmenaient avec eux leur bétail et tout ce qu'ils pouvaient de leur avoir, en en levant même à cet effet les chariots et bêtes de somme de leurs voisins Chrétiens. Ces derniers ne se sont pas fait faute de profiter dans plusieurs endroits des premiers moments de délivrance pour se dédommager des vexations qu'ils avaient endurées si longtemps, en pillant les maisons abandonnées par les Musulmans.

Quant à des assassinats ou cruautés commises sur de paisibles habitants et surtout avec les raffinements dont l'imagination exercée des Turcs est seule capable,—c'est une de ces indignes calomnies dont, depuis les massacres du printemps dernier, les organes de la Sublime Porte cherchent en vain à charger la conscience des autres et contre laquelle s'élèveront sans doute celles de tous les témoins impartiaux de la marche de l'armée Impériale. Plusieurs agents militaires étrangers et correspondants de journaux Européens sont d'ailleurs là, aux avant-gardes même des colonnes Russes pour pouvoir témoigner de la vérité, vis-à-vis de ceux que la hardiesse de la calomnie Ottomane aurait pu rendre méfiants à l'égard des simples démentis de l'autorité Impériale.

Inclosure in No. 528.

M. Nélidow to M. de Hambourger.

Tirnovo, le $\frac{8}{20}$ *Juillet,* 1877.

IL vient de se produire à la prise des défilés de Schipka un de ces faits de trahison militaire qui sont sévèrement reprouvés par les lois de la guerre. Il mérite à ce titre de recevoir la plus grande publicité, tout en étant spécialement signalé au Gouvernement dont l'armée s'en est rendue coupable.

Lorsqu'après des attaques renouvelées de nos troupes contre les positions fortifiées des Turcs du côté du Midi, ces derniers se virent enfin dans l'impossibilité de les défendre, ils hissèrent le $\frac{6}{18}$ Juillet un pavillon blanc. Le feu cessa aussitôt de notre part, et nos bataillons de tirailleurs, le 13me et le 15me, avancèrent pour prendre possession des retranchements ennemis. Ils y furent reçus par une décharge de mitraille et un feu de mousquetterie qui leur infligèrent des pertes très sensibles. Aussitôt après l'ennemi, se séparant en petits groupes, évacuait la position et se sauvait par des sontiers de montagne en laissant sur place son camp, ses canons au nombre de huit, et trois drapeaux. Ces trophées furent recueillis le lendemain matin par le Général Scobéleff, qui venait occuper la position du côté nord. Mais il y trouva à côté de quelques blessés Turcs, un amas de têtes de nos soldats qui avaient été blessés, faits prisoniers, ou tués dans les combats des jours précédents. Les officiers étrangers attachés à nos colonnes d'avant garde ont été invités à en prendre acte.

Le fait a été constaté par le correspondant du "Times," présent au combat, qui en a fait l'objet d'une communication spéciale à son journal.

No. 529.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *Bucharest, July* 29, 1877.

I RECEIVED your Cypher L by messenger; profit by his return to furnish following information, which will be telegraphed from Bucharest:—

Defeat of Russians at Plevna on the 19th was complete. They lost 3,000 men. Attack was made by three regiments of infantry, three cavalry, and five batteries. Russians at first successsully occupied town; had failed, however, to reconnoitre road from Widdin by which Turkish reinforcements arrived, and drove them out with great slaughter.

This defeat considerable check to advance. Original plan was investment of Rustchuk by the 12th and 13th corps d'armée, whose rear covered by 11th corps, which would have also watched Shumla. Had Plevna fallen, Balkan would have been crossed by 8th and 9th corps with the 4th in reserve. Defeat necessitated change of plan and delay. Decision to renew attack on Plevna, where Turks are said to have 30,000 men.

Russians are concentrating about 50,000 men for this purpose. Attack probable to-morrow. Investment of Rustchuk delayed because part of 11th corps has been marched back to assist in the Plevna attack.

Present position as follows:—4th corps, Simnitza, with one detached for Plevna; 11th, half about to attack Plevna and remainder a little north-east of Tirnova; 12th and 13th occupying line from Pirgos southward of 11th corps near to Tirnova, facing the east; portion of 14th corps holding the Kustendje-Tchernavoda Railway, remainder approaching Silistria. Balkan will be crossed by 8th, 9th, and 11th corps.

Two additional divisions of infantry and brigade of rifles on the way from Kieff.

Russians have cut Adrianople-Sophia Railway in two places.

I do not believe more than 25,000 have crossed the Balkan.

Emperor evidently believes that Her Majesty's Government encourages the publication of alleged Russian cruelties, and is unwilling to give publicity to official or private denials of them.

No. 530.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 312.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 30, 1877.*

TURKISH troops have reoccupied Loftcha, south of Plevna, the Russian force there having been compelled to remove to Selvi.

No. 531.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 313.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 30, 1877.*

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday, No. 311, I beg to call your attention to a report of Vice-Consul Maling on the defences of Dardanelles sent home in my despatch No. 625 of 17th June. It gives the best account that I have on the subject, and was communicated to Admiral Hornby.

No. 532.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, July 30, 1877.*

VICE-CONSUL MARSHALL reports last night from Widdin rumours of a fresh engagement of Osman Pasha's between Nicopolis and Lovcha. It is expected at Widdin that Roumanians will cross at Florentin.

No. 533.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, July 30, 1877.*

RUMOURS of an immediate mobilization are again in circulation, but they are contradicted at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. There is a general belief that the question will be considered at a Council now sitting, for which the Hungarian Prime Minister and Minister of Finance have come from Pesth.

No. 534.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 30.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, July 30, 1877.*

MIDHAT PASHA, I am assured, is here unofficially, and no arrangement has yet been made for his return to Constantinople. He is, however, in correspondence with the Sultan's Secretary. He saw Count Andrassy yesterday, who told him that no diplomatic intervention can take place until relative strength of the belligerents has been changed by a decided battle. He intends calling upon me to-morrow morning.

No. 535.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 31.)

(No. 31.)
My Lord, *Tunis, July 24, 1877.*

IT is now a year since I have had the honour to bring to your Lordship's knowledge, in a series of reports, the little cordiality which existed between the Bey and his Prime Minister, General Khaïreddin, and the friendly efforts I then made to bring about a better understanding between them, or at least to dissuade His

Highness from dispensing, without mature consideration, with his Minister's services; and the Minister from too hastily tendering his resignation, which I had reason to believe would be unhesitatingly accepted by the Bey.

Although a reconciliation was effected at the time, yet it cannot be said that it was cordial and sincere. The Bey could not easily brook the domineering demeanour of his Prime Minister who, on his side, could not be brought to soften his unbending disposition, which had lost to him the vast popularity with which he had entered office.

It was evident that such a state of things could not last. His enemies, who had increased in number and activity, availed themselves of it to create a greater feeling of mistrust in the mind of the Bey; and they took occasion of passing events in Turkey to bring against him, among other accusations, that of following the policy which was dictated to him by the French Representative with reference to the Sultan, instead of the policy which the national and religious sentiment of a Mahommedan people required at the hands of a Minister of a Mussulman Prince.

The recent requisitions of the Sublime Porte in aid of its armies accelerated a crisis which could not be prolonged without detriment to the public service. General Khaïreddin was taxed by the majority of his colleagues as well as by public opinion of having yielded to the exigencies of the French Chargé d'Affaires by endeavouring to persuade His Highness to declare his neutrality in the war between Turkey and Russia, by impeding the sending of horses and mules for the service of the Ottoman armies, and by preventing General Hussein from proceeding to Constantinople unless he resigned the Ministry of Public Works.

He was, therefore, called upon to declare himself either a partizan of French or Turkish policy.

Contemporaneously with these discussions and the ill-feeling they produced, a very severe letter from a Tunisian Ulema or Doctor of Divinity appeared in the Arabic paper, the "Djowaïb," published at Constantinople, animadverting in very strong language on General Khaïreddin's conduct of affairs; accusing him of having surrendered the Regency to France; and the Bey of great weakness in the accomplishment of his duties as a Prince and a Mussulman towards the Caliphate and his Sovereign.

The publication of this letter produced a profound sensation among the Mussulman population, so much so indeed, that the Bey reproached General Khaïreddin of having, by the manner he conducted his affaires, compromised him in the opinion of his people.

Unable to bear any admonition from his Prince, and impelled by his determined character to carry on the administration according to his own views, without submitting to any inference; and probably, tired also of the intrigues of his rivals, General Khaïreddin presented, on the 21st instant, to the Bey in Council, a set of conditions upon the acceptance or refusal of which his retention of office would depend.

His Highness requested him to keep his conditions, adding, that he was perfectly able to govern the country without his assistance, that he might retire to his residence to repose from his labours, and that when his services were called for, His Highness would again avail himself of them.

The Bey immediately proceeded to appoint General Mohamed as Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs in the room of General Khaïreddin, who, whatever his personal faults might be, was an able and intelligent Minister, and does not merit the allegations that have been preferred against him, though he probably endeavoured recently, in the uncertainty of the fate that awaited Turkey, to conciliate France by a not too overt opposition to her counsels.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 536.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 31.)

(Personnelle et Confidentielle.)
(Extrait.)
(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 25 Juillet, 1877.*

LA Grèce n'a cessé de nous prodiguer les assurances de ses intentions loyales et pacifiques, et jusqu'à ces derniers temps, grâce aux plus sages conseils, la conduite du

Gouvernement Hellénique a été conforme à ces assurances. Cependant, depuis quelques semaines, des indices graves révèlent l'intention du Gouvernement Hellénique de se départir de ce programme de réserve et d'abstention dont l'observation assurait si heureusement ses bons rapports avec l'Empire Ottoman. La Sublime Porte ne saurait rester indifférente devant des symptômes aussi accusateurs, et elle doit prévoir le cas où ces dispositions hostiles se traduisaient en faits, non pas par des actes d'hostilité directe, puisque la Grèce ne pourrait se mettre en guerre de sa propre autorité et en dehors des trois Puissances protectrices, mais en provoquant le soulèvement de nos provinces limitrophes.

Je prie votre Excellence d'appeler l'attention la plus sérieuse de Lord Derby sur cette grave éventualité, et de ne pas lui dissimuler que, dans le cas où elle se présenterait, le Gouvernement Impérial, tout en réprimant énergiquement les mouvements insurrectionnels, se verrait contraint de prendre des mesures pour tarir la source de la révolte. La Sublime Porte, éclairée par l'expérience, ne pourrait tolérer qu'un Etat voisin, tout en gardant une neutralité apparente, fomente et alimente la guerre civile sur notre territoire. Si la Grèce est réellement décidée à se laisser entraîner dans cette voie dangereuse, elle devrait assumer les conséquences de sa politique, et ne s'en prendre qu'à elle seule des maux auxquels elle se serait exposée, au mépris du droit des gens.

Votre Excellence aura soin de saisir une occasion pour développer ces idées confidentiellement et d'une manière toute particulière à Lord Derby.

No. 537.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, July 31.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 30 Juillet*, 1877.

UNE division partie de Plevna a attaqué les Russes dans les positions qu'ils occupaient à Loftcha. L'ennemi battu a pris la fuite dans la direction de Selvi. En entrant triomphalement dans la ville, les troupes Impériales ont délivré plus de 170 Musulmans que les Russes détenaient prisonniers la chaîne aux pieds. La population fait un récit lamentable des souffrances qu'elle a endurées.

No. 538.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.) *Biela, July 20*, 1877.

MUCH astonishment here at the repeated assertions in the English press of Russian atrocities in Bulgaria. Not being at the front I am unable to deny them, but I have not heard of a single case on this side of the Danube; on the contrary, I hear from eye-witnesses that the Russian soldiers have shown the greatest kindness to Turkish prisoners, sharing their bread and water with them.

No. 539.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.) *Biela, July 23*, 1877.

I HAVE just seen an Englishman who has been with Rustchuk army; he reports massacre by Turks of 100 Christians in churchyard of village Kaseljevo, beyond River Lom. This gentleman, who has been to the front the whole time, assures me that he has heard of no case of Russian cruelty.

No. 540.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Most Confidential.) *Rome, July 30*, 1877.

ITALIAN Government hears from Vienna that a mobilization of part of the Austrian army, with a view to occupation of the Herzegovina and Bosnia, accompanied by certain military precautions on Italian frontier, is likely.

This would create a good deal of agitation in Italy, and place the Government in a difficult position.

No. 541.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 31.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, July 31*, 1877.

SOME secret negotiations appear going on between Servia and Greece. The Consul-General of the latter Kingdom gone to see Prince Milan and his Ministry at Craguievats.

No. 542.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 31.)

(No. 314.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 31*, 1877.

CONSUL at Erzeroum telegraphs as follows:—

"Orders from Constantinople to officers commanding direct them, should they enter Russian territory, to spare only the women and children, but to slaughter every man without mercy. On Friday, Turkish Commander-in-chief pushed cavalry reconnaissance across the frontier. Same day severe, but indecisive, action near Ain. Russian division, reported 20,000 strong, marching from Ardahan; outposts reached Pennek on Friday. Three battalions of Imperial Guard are to leave this immediately for Gorgeboghas. This advance will oblige Commander-in-chief to fall back to save his communications."

I cannot always trust Mr. Zohrab's telegrams. I will make immediate inquiries as to order alleged to have been given to Turkish Commanders.

No. 543.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 31.)

(No. 315.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 31*, 1877.

CONSUL BLUNT telegraphs to-day that Osman Pasha telegraphs from Plevna that yesterday he was attacked by a Russian force estimated by prisoners taken at 60,000 men, with forty guns; that Russians were repulsed with great loss; that the attack has been renewed; and that a severe engagement is now going on.

No. 544.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 31.)

(No. 316.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, July 31*, 1877.

AARIFI PASHA has resigned, and is succeeded by Server Pasha as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No. 545.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received July* 31.)

Vienna, July 31, 1877, 8 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Council, after a declaration in favour of the maintenance of neutrality and of their entire confidence in Count Andrassy, authorized him, whenever he may think it necessary, to call upon Minister of War to mobilize one army corps and one division, or, in other words, four divisions, an army corps being on a peace footing 25,000 men, and when mobilized 60,000. Arrangements were also, I understand, made for providing the necessary funds.

I have been informed that nothing will be done unless the Turkish armies are entirely defeated, and that the mobilized force will be sent to the Servian frontier.

No. 546.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 391.)

Foreign Office, July 31, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 791 of the 17th instant, stating that you had handed to Safvet Pasha a Memorandum respecting the promised Bulgarian amnesty, but pointing out that under present circumstances you fear it will be hardly possible for the Sultan to grant one, and I have to state to you that your proceedings in this matter are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 547.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 392.)

Foreign Office, July 31, 1877.

Sir,

HER Majesty's Government approve your having called the attention of the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs to the threatened attack of the Kurds upon the Nestorian tribes, as reported in your despatch No. 784 of July 16.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 548.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 393.)

Foreign Office, July 31, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 777 of July 14, and have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the instruction which you have addressed to Mr. Consul Blunt, directing him to exert all his influence with the Turkish civil and religious authorities with a view to prevent the Mussulman population from retaliating upon the Christians on account of the cruelties which, it is alleged, have been inflicted on the Mahometans by Christian Bulgarians and by Russian troops.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

END

No. 549.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 394.)

Foreign Office, July 31, 1877.

Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 790 of the 17th instant has been received, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the instructions which you addressed to Mr. Consul Reade, desiring him to return to Varna, and, if possible, to his post at Rustchuk.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.